

GoodFood

MIDDLE EAST

48**WAYS TO
IMPROVE
YOUR DIET****Spicy Thai
prawn noodles** p43**2014 Food
Trends****Predictions for
the year ahead****Eye on
Ireland****Green cuisine in
the emerald isle**

Eat healthy *everyday!*

- * *All-day meal plans*
- * *Clever ideas to eat more fruit & veg*
- * *Lighter desserts*

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SUPPERS****LIGHT
AND EASY****HEALTHY TWIST
TO CAKE**

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EDITORIAL

EDITOR: Sudeshna Ghosh
sudeshna.ghosh@cpimediagroup.com
ASSISTANT EDITOR: Nicola Monteath
nicola.monteath@cpimediagroup.com
SENIOR DESIGNER: Odilaine Salalac-Mejorada
PHOTOGRAPHER: Anas Cherur

ADVERTISING

SALES DIRECTOR: Lauren Wing
lauren.wing@cpimediagroup.com /+971 55 6079507
SALES MANAGER: Luke Britton
luke.britton@cpimediagroup.com /+971 50 873 0284

MARKETING & COMMUNICATIONS

Marizel Salvador
marizel.salvador@cpimediagroup.com

ONLINE

Louie Alma

PRODUCTION

Devaprakash

DISTRIBUTION

Rochelle Almeida
rochelle.almeida@cpimediagroup.com

FOR SUBSCRIPTION ENQUIRIES, LOG ON TO:

www.cpievents.net/mag/magazine.php

GROUP CHAIRMAN & FOUNDER Dominic De Sousa

GROUP CEO Nadeem Hood

GROUP COO Gina O'Hara

GROUP DIRECTOR OF EDITORIAL Paul Godfrey

GROUP DIRECTOR OF SALES Carol Owen

GROUP MANAGING EDITORS

Melanie Mingas, Georgina Wilson-Powell

PRINTED BY

Emirates Printing Press LLC, Dubai

PUBLISHED BY



Head Office, PO Box 13700, Dubai, UAE

Tel: +971 4 440 9100

Fax: +971 4 447 2409

Group Office, Dubai Media City

Building 4, Office G08, Dubai, UAE

A publication licensed by IMPZ

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BBC Worldwide Magazines Unit:

BBC Good Food Magazine is owned by BBC Worldwide and produced on its behalf by Immediate Media Company Limited. BBC Worldwide's profits are returned to the BBC and help fund new BBC programmes.

DIRECTOR OF PUBLISHING: Nicholas Brett

HEAD OF PUBLISHING: Chris Kerwin

HEAD OF EDITORIAL: Jenny Potter

PUBLISHING COORDINATOR: Eva Abramik

Immediate Media Co.

CHAIRMAN: Stephen Alexander

DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Peter Phippen

CEO: Tom Bureau

HEAD OF LICENSING AND SYNDICATION:

Joanna Marshall

INTERNATIONAL PARTNERS MANAGER:

Aleksandra Nowacka

UK Good Food Team

EDITOR: Gillian Carter

CREATIVE DIRECTOR FOOD GROUP:

Elizabeth Galbraith

FOOD DIRECTOR FOOD GROUP: Lulu Grimes

PUBLISHING DIRECTOR: Alfie Lewis

Welcome!



I really enjoyed picking the brains of some of the region's food experts and influencers to jointly crystal ball gaze into the year to come, while putting together the food trends feature for this issue (*What and how you will be eating in 2014, p20*). I also found it very interesting how interlinked many of them are – for instance, Latin American food is going to be bigger than ever, so are superfoods. Superfoods such as quinoa and açai berries, which originate from Latin America! Restaurants are steering away from formal fine dining set-ups, while sharing-style tapas restaurants are taking off. Coincidence? I think not.

This is one of the most exciting times to be in food in this region, and based on some of the rumblings that I've been hearing in recent months, here are some of the food trends that I predict will take off in 2014 – and I'm looking forward to it:

Food trucks, massive elsewhere in the world, are a really great way for people to sample good food – often from top chefs – in an easy, low-effort way. I know that this region, with its lack of street culture and pedestrian options, doesn't naturally lend itself to such a trend, but I really don't see why a gourmet food truck can't be parked up at JBR Walk or at DIFC, for example, for a good six months of the year at least. Rumour has it some are in the works, so here's hoping!

A similar sort of trendy, urban style of making good food easily available is pop up restaurants, and we've had a few of those in recent months pioneered by the likes of Lime & Tonic. I recently had dinner at a rather unique pop-up concept, Guns + Butter, which brought a Detroit-based chef here courtesy of Rolling Stones magazine, randomly enough. The venue was Baker & Spice – their culinary philosophies of focussing on local produce are in alignment – the food was great and the chef promised he'd be back. I have no doubt we will see more such creative concepts in 2014, and hopefully, some of them home-grown too.

If there's one thing local chefs seem to have cottoned on to of late, it's sous vide cooking – it's popping up everywhere these days, and hurrah for that. With sous vide machines becoming slightly more accessible and affordable, I suspect this year, more home cooks will take to this lovely method of slow-cooking, having enjoyed its tender results in restaurants.

The other trend that most experts are in agreement about is an increasingly health conscious diner. If 2014 is the year you resolve to eat better, then this issue is packed with inspiration. Read on, cook and eat healthy more often, and have a fabulous New Year!

Sudeshna



I really enjoyed picking the brains of some of the region's food experts and influencers to jointly crystal ball gaze into the year to come, while putting together the food trends feature for this issue (*What and how you will be eating in 2014, p20*). I also found it very interesting how interlinked many of them are – for instance, Latin American food is going to be bigger than ever, so are superfoods. Superfoods such as quinoa and açai berries, which originate from Latin America! Restaurants are steering away from formal fine dining

Editor's picks



► I'm a bit of a hoarder when it comes to pretty boxes – I'll be storing cookies at my desk in these! P11

► I'll be trying this Apple & Sultana porridge as a warming winter breakfast ! p30



► I found detoxing the Detox Delight way to be really effective and easy, p60





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WIN!

Our recipe descriptions

- V** Suitable for vegetarians
- ❄** You can freeze it
- ❄** Not suitable for freezing
- Easy** Simple recipes even beginners can make
- A little effort** These require a bit more skill and confidence – such as making pastry
- More of a challenge** Recipes aimed at experienced cooks
- Low fat** 12g or less per portion
- Low cal** 500 calories or less per main.
- Superhealthy** Low in saturated fat, 5g or less per portion; low in salt, 1.5g or less; and at least one of the following: provides one-third or more of your daily requirement of fibre, iron, calcium, folic acid and/or vitamin C, or counts at least one portion of your recommended 5-a-day fruit and veg.
- Good for you** Low in saturated fat, low in salt.
- Heart healthy** Low in saturated fat, with 5g or less, and low in salt, with 1.5g or less, and high in omega-3 fatty acids
- 1 of 5-a-day** The number of portions of fruit and/or veg contained in a serving
- Vit C** **Iron** **Omega-3** **Calcium** **Folate** **Fibre**

Indicating recipes that are good sources of useful nutrients

GLUTEN FREE Indicates a recipe is free from gluten

Some recipes contain pork & alcohol. These are clearly marked and are for non-Muslims only. Look for these symbols:

- P** Contains pork
- 🍷** Contains alcohol

Store Directory

Contact numbers for outlets featured in this issue

2XL Furniture: 04-2888071

Bloomingdale's Home:
04-3505333

Crescendo: 04-3928098

Daiso: 04-3882902

Lakeland: 04-3236081

Pan Emirates: 04-3430800

Sauce Gifts: 04-3463393

Tavola: 04-3402933

Note: Prices in Qatari Riyals are approximately the same as UAE Dirhams.

Your say

We love to hear from you!

ALL SET FOR CHRISTMAS!

It's Christmas season, which means the festive spirit is all around! I was looking around for the perfect Christmas menu and was glad I got the *BBC Good Food ME* December issue. I went over to my friend's place recently and tried making a cranberry and currant sauce, but wasn't too pleased. I decided to try it again at home after I found a recipe on your website – the sweet and spicy sauce turned out yummy! Thank you *BBC Good Food ME* for also sharing a festive menu (*The Perfect Christmas Menu*, December 2013) in the magazine. All the healthy dish ideas are very tempting too, and I can't wait to try it out. I truly enjoy reading the magazine and cooking.

Hannah Joji



TRULY INSPIRED

The *BBC Good Food ME* Food Club events have inspired me to try cooking a variety of cuisines that I'm not accustomed to. I love trying out some of the dishes that were cooked at the events as well. I recently got the magazine from a friend and I've had my eyes glued to it ever since. Most of the recipes I've tried have turned out great, which just goes to show important it is to have recipes that are tried and tested.

Sinatra



TALK TO US!

Email us on feedback@bbcgoodfoodme.com with your thoughts, views and comments.

You can also connect with us on social media! Find us on:



@bbcgoodfoodmiddleeast



@bbcgoodfoodme

Or, you could write to us at:
The Editor
BBC Good Food Middle East.
Dubai Media City, Building 4, Office G08
PO Box 13700, Dubai, UAE.



The writer of the Star Letter wins a **Dhs1,000 shopping voucher from Crate and Barrel**. The 50-year old American brand is known for its exquisite selection of homeware products, essential kitchen items, outdoor and indoor furniture and everything else you can ever want for your décor. The collections are suitable for modern and traditional homes alike and are updated every season. There's really no better destination when it comes to cosy, chic and stylish furniture and home accessories. Crate and Barrel stores are located in Mall of the Emirates and Mirdiff City Centre, Dubai.



Crate&Barrel

Star Letter

ONE FOR THE BOOKSHELF

I absolutely loved the December issue as it's the perfect combination of all things festive and celebratory. I loved flipping through each page of the issue and definitely think this one is going on my shelf under 'Must have festive collections'. Gorgeous recipes accompanied by deliciously stunning pictures – what more can a cook ask for? I loved the Apple and cranberry crumble (*A Taste of Nostalgia*, December 2013) and the French onion soup with beer (*Speakeasy with Shannon*, December 2013) both of which I tried, and devoured in no time! We've organised a gathering for all the little kids in the family to come together and create the gingerbread cottage (*Sugar and spice*, December 2013) – I think it's going to be a

fun experience! I also love how you have thoughtfully included recipes on how to give leftovers a new lease of life. I can't wait to give the Christmas pizza and turkey and potato curry (*Love your leftovers*, December 2013) a go! I'll also be trying comfort food recipes such as Turkey tortilla pie (*A week of healthy one-pots*, December 2013) on a chilly night. The 2013 festive gift guide has been especially helpful and the only thing I'm sorry about is that I can't make it to Prague this year – sigh! Brilliant job *BBC Good Food ME*, this is the perfect round-up for the year!

Ritu Matthew



A HELPFUL READ

I wanted to say a big thank you to *BBC Good Food ME* for giving me recipe ideas for the festive season. I am a relatively new wife and mother, with little experience on cooking during the festive season, which is why I was a bit worried. A few months ago I started purchasing the magazine and was greatly

relieved when I spotted the Christmas issue! I will start my subscription in the New Year and look forward to cooking delicious food in 2014.

Elisabeth Stephenson



From our social media pages

- * Love this month's *BBC Good Food ME*, will try a few recipes from it soon. – *Gaganjeet Sethi*
- * Got a lovely goodie bag from the masterclass. Love the festive feel in this issue – *Saloni Jolly-Banga*
- * The December issue of *BBC Good Food ME* looks lovely! – *Ishita B Saha*



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فندق شانغريلا دبي
Shangri-La hotel
 DUBAI

Foodie file

What's hot and happening in the culinary world, here and around the globe.



St. Tropez Bistro



Watatsumi

DINE IN THE CITY

- * French bistros seem to be hot property in Dubai at the moment! The most recent one to launch is St. Tropez Bistro, a charming eatery in Mall of the Emirates which comprises of a modern lounge, Mediterranean-inspired bistro and café-style terrace – all of which exude a French Riviera vibe. Don't miss their wagyu sliders, bouillabaisse, moules mariniere and chocolate hazelnut tarte. Call 04-3413415.
- * Residents of Abu Dhabi can now enjoy a taste of North African cuisine, as Almaz by Momo has opened its doors in The Galleria at Sowwah Square. The Moroccan menu features signature dishes such as pigeon pastilla, tagines and new dishes including prawns khetaiff and quinoa salad. Call 02-6767702.
- * Watatsumi at Le Meridien Mina Seyahi Beach Resort and Marina is the latest Japanese addition to Dubai's gastronomic scene. Head there to follow the Izakaya style of sharing traditional Japanese food with a twist, such as wasabi prawns and king crab California maki. Other dishes on the menu including black cod, scampi tempura and tartars. Call 04-3993373.

TIME TO LOSE WEIGHT!

Have you put on a festive stone or two? Head to The Weight Loss Show at Dubai International Marina Club from January 17-18, for a fun two days of all things health related – check out the Eat Smart zone to watch cooking demonstrations and find out how you and your family can follow a healthy diet; speak to dietitians, nutritionists and fitness trainers; and join in the free Zumba and boot camp classes. Want to teach your children about lifestyle and wellness? The kid's zone has tons of interactive activities and games on offer! Free entry for all, visit weightlossshow.ae.

“There is nothing like soup. It is by nature eccentric: no two are ever alike, unless of course you get your soup in a can.”

- American cookbook author, Laurie Colwin

KITCHEN PRODIGY

Chef Dylan Carter has been the talk of the culinary scene in Australia at the moment. Do you know why? Because he's 14! Most boys of his age probably spend their spare time playing video games, but not Dylan. Even without a degree in hand, the teenager has become the first Junior Development chef for The Australian Good Food Guide, and has made stunning creations fit for any fine dining venue. Some of his dishes include duck smoked in hay, artichoke, pear, fungi and watercress and a sous vide ocean trout. Now that's an inspiring youngster if there ever was one!

PERU ON A PLATE!

Have you ever tried Peruvian food? You might want to, as the country was recently awarded the title of World's Leading Culinary Destinations 2014 at the World Travel Awards, for the second year in a row. Peruvian food has been heavily influenced by Europeans and Asians over the years, and is also a producer of over 4,000 potato varieties, corn, chilli and fish. We love this delicious, healthy cuisine!



Compiled by NICOLA MONTEATH | Photographs SUPPLIED, PHOTOS.COM.



GET COOKING!

Maybury, the all-new concept store in Dubai Marina isn't just any old grocery store – here you can find a variety of specialty foods, ingredients and household supplies or grab a cup of coffee and cake, soup, salad and freshly baked breads at May Café on the mezzanine floor. You can also enrol yourself and the children in a cooking class at the Miele-designed cooking studio, to learn how to make three-course meals of gourmet delicacies such as cherry tomato tatin and dame blanche with chocolate sauce and crème Chantilly, as well as specific cooking techniques such as making puff pastry. From Dhs89 per person for cooking classes, call 04-4238073.

Diet at your door

If you're looking to start the New Year on a healthy note, then look no further than Slim and Lite, the latest diet delivery programme offering packages to help you lose weight the healthy way. Choose a customised diet plan – which includes a nutritional assessment – or opt for the lunch box, sunrise package (includes breakfast and lunch) or the sunset package (lunch and dinner). Delivery is available in Dubai, Abu Dhabi, Al Ain and Doha, price start from Dhs55 for lunch only, and Dhs2,700 for the full-day monthly package. Visit slimandlite.ae for more.

New beginnings

The new chef of table 9 has been revealed! British native Darren Velvick is the new Chef Patron of the award-winning restaurant located in Hilton Dubai Creek. With culinary experience at Michelin-starred restaurants such as Marcus Wareing at The Berkeley, and with Gordon Ramsay Holdings outlets under his belt, we can't wait to see what exciting plans this chef has in store. The restaurant now goes under the name of 'table 9 by darren velvick.'



This just in:

We love the über-cool Smeg Denim fridge – worth splurging on to add a funky touch to your kitchen. The denim fabric is treated with plasma, a nano-technology which protects the surface, while the fridge itself has a 256-litre capacity, adjustable thermostat and automatic defrost. Dhs9,999 at Better Life stores.

What's trending

#healthfood

Now that the New Year has begun, it's time to jump on the health food bandwagon and eat well! We found out that a number of people love green smoothies for breakfast and are eating low-fat options such as zucchini brownies to curb sweet-tooth cravings. MSN also shared a list of health foods, which include coffee, horseradish and button mushrooms on their Twitter feed.



PAX
ITALIAN CUISINE

FAME GAME. FOR THE BOLD.

Winter is traditionally known as the hunting season in Italy. This whole month of January, have an adventurous start to your year with an Italian hunter's feast.

Eaten by the nobles and peasants in olden times, dishes are inspired by the irony of rural and sophisticated traditions which include *Cervo ai frutti rossi* (Venison tenderloin with red berries sauce), *Coniglio selvatico al miele di carrubo* (wild rabbit with carob honey sauce), *Taglioline al ragout di lepre* (Tagliolini pasta with hare ragout), amongst others.

For table reservations, call +971 4 317 4515 or e-mail dine.dtdu@dusit.com



www.dusit.com

Call +971 4 317 4515 for table reservations.
Email: dine.dtdu@dusit.com

Dusit Thani
DUBAI

Aisle file

Gorgeous gourmet buys, kitchen gear, home décor and more.



We will be swapping our dinner plates for this simple and elegant 20-piece dinner set for the New Year. Dhs79 at **PAN EMIRATES STORES**.

Start the year on a healthy note by cooking nutritious meals at home with the My Kitchen 2 Tier Steamer, which has five pre-set programmes for eggs, meat and fish, vegetables, chicken and rice, and mixed foods. Dhs385 at **LAKELAND**.



We love convenient, nifty products such as this potato dicer, which guarantees perfect cubes each time! Dhs9 from **DAISO**.



This Undergrowth teacup and saucer is perfect for fashionable foodies who love hosting afternoon tea parties with the girls. Dhs295 at **SAUCE GIFTS**.



Wedgwood have created a selection of four Ceramic Replica Plates exclusively for the Museum of Islamic Art in Doha. All the intricately designed plates are made using silk screen printing techniques and come in an elegant gift box. We can't wait to get our hands on one of these! QR330 each at **MUSEUM OF ISLAMIC ART (MIA) GIFT SHOP IN DOHA**.

Serve your kids boiled eggs in this fun Circo egg cup available in blue, green, pink and yellow colours, to get them to eat it without kicking up a fuss. Dhs70 at **TAVOLA**.



Remember those desktop pencil sharpeners that always seemed so much fun to use, that we had way more sharp pencils than we could ever use?! This Nut chopper with a rotatable handle promises to make chopping nuts as much fun! Dhs63 at **2XL**.



Stack flapjacks and granola bars or other baked treats in these gorgeous Blott Floral set of three tins, which will pretty up your kitchen counter too. Dhs46 at **BLOTTSHOP.COM**.



We will be serving our guests cups of coffee and cakes in this bright orange-red Raymisa Peruvia wooden tray. Dhs250 at **BLOOMINGDALE'S HOME**.

JAZZ & BUBBLES

Fridays 12.30pm - 4.00pm

Come and experience your favorite Jazz & Bubbles Friday Brunch in a whole new setting at the Talk restaurant. Live cooking and Jazz create a sizzling ambience, with an extensive international buffet featuring everything grilled meats, sushi, tandoori, pizza, pasta and more. There's even a dedicated cheese room and also a kids corner for the young and energetic brunch goers.

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Brunch





Here to help

Our expert chef Andy Campbell offers practical advice to tackle all your cooking dilemmas.

Q How do you keep crusted chops and chicken lollipops crisp when packing them for an alfresco party?

A. Food with crusts can be tricky as they go soft very easily. Try wrapping them in wax paper and then in aluminum foil. Then place them in an airtight container with a layer of cooked rice on top to draw out any moisture in the box. This will keep battered and bread crumbed food, crisp and delicious!

Q Is there a way of making smoked salmon at home?

A. I wouldn't recommend attempting raw smoked salmon at home, but you can try the cooked version. Make a brine with 2.5 litres of water, 100g salt, 90g brown sugar and 120ml of maple syrup. Steep the salmon in the brine overnight. Then dry skin side down on a rack in a cool place for 3 hours – you could keep the piece of salmon under a fan if you have one, as it needs to be dried out. Prepare a barbecue with wood chips soaked in water, to get the smokiness, and cook on low heat to your liking.



Q How do you keep tarts from becoming soft underneath?

A. The best way to keep tart shells from softening is to add a layer of grease proof paper to the tart and baking beans on top when baking. Cook the tart for ten minutes and then remove the paper and beans and cook for further ten minutes. This is known as blind baking and helps keep the tart shell hard and even.

Q There are a variety of potatoes in the market and I never know which one to use for what – please advise?

A. There are many different kinds of potatoes, so I understand how confusing it must be to see a variety of the same vegetable. As a rule, waxy potatoes, often referred to as new potatoes, are the season's first produce. These taste great sautéed and in salads, whereas floury potatoes, known as old potatoes, are harvested in the latter part of the potato season and are more suitable mashed, roasted or as chips. My tip would be to choose King Edwards potatoes which are available in most leading supermarkets. These all-rounders can be mashed, baked, fried, roasted and are the best for gnocchi as well.

Q Whenever I fry tofu, it sticks to the pan and burns. Could you please suggest what I need to do to get a crisp coating on tofu?

A. Most people make the mistake of cutting tofu right out of the packet and frying it. You need to make sure you wipe the tofu dry with a kitchen towel beforehand. Once you do this, roll it in rice flour and then cook on medium to high heat in a non-stick pan.



Andy's ingredient of the month



My refrigerator is stocked with locally grown broccoli at the moment, as the heart-healthy vegetable

is filled with nutrients and tastes great steamed, in pasta, salads and stir-fries. Broccoli is a great source of vitamin A, D and K and is also rich in fibre.



Menu planner

Whip up a delicious meal with recipes from this issue

Golden Globes viewing party



No movie-centric gathering is complete without Spiced chilli popcorn, p67



Easy to nibble on and delicious – Chicken satay, p48



These Sausages with warm cabbage hot dogs are filling, and healthy, p35



The classic Bakewell Tart, made lighter, is perfect for celebrating the winners! p56

The Golden Globe awards ceremony will be held on January 12.

Tried & tasted

Each month, we review two of the city's top tables.

Budget dining restaurants

Where you can get good food without breaking the bank



Where: Cravin' Cajun, Novotel Al Barsha

What's it like: A refreshing new addition to the Dubai dining scene, this restaurant not only introduces a new and relatively lesser known cuisine to local punters (*I mean, do we really need another fine dining Italian restaurant here?*), but also offers it at good-value price points. The restaurant is large and inviting, with an open kitchen-style counter displaying copper pots and pans adding a homely touch, while the funky chandeliers give the space a hint of contemporary chic. The menu (designed in the style of an LP record) offers a selection of New Orleans classics – the chef is from there – and the live soul band creates the perfect atmosphere. One of the first things you associate with New Orleans is gumbo, so of course we opted for the chicken gumbo as a starter – the depth of flavours coming through in each spoonful of this hearty soup was incredible. I definitely wanted to try the trio of oysters as well – grilled, topped with mushrooms and Parmesan, and the Rockefeller with a spinach and onion topping – and really enjoyed it, a welcome departure from the raw, shucked oysters we see at buffets everywhere in this town, and a great way for oyster virgins to dip their toes in. The chef highly recommended the Louisiana crab cake as well, which was truly a delicious, flaky celebration of the crustacean's sweet meat. Be warned, portions are huge, in true American fashion. That's probably why I could barely make a dent in my indulgent shrimp and grits main course, a massive bowl of shrimp bathed in a creamy, cheesy sauce on a bed of corn cooked with milk. My partner's Cajun southern fried chicken with waffles was recommended by the staff, and we're glad we listened to them – tender, buttermilk marinated chicken, complemented by sweet waffles and fried cabbage, a unique combination of flavours for our tastebuds and utterly delicious. Even though we decided to share dessert, we barely got through the bananas foster pain perdu between the two of us – an absolutely sinful, but oh-so-moreish dish of fried bread, banana slices, ice cream and a

beautiful cinnamon sauce. A meal here isn't for the calorie-conscious, but well worth indulging in now and then. My advice? Share!

If you want to go: Around Dhs200 for meal for two, without drinks. Call 04-3049000.

- Sudeshna Ghosh

Best for:
A relaxed
night out with
friends

Where: Picante, Four Points by Sheraton Bur Dubai

What's it like: Most people associate Portuguese food with just piri-piri chicken. But this eatery, popular with Brazilians, Angolans and Portuguese – a sign that it is authentic food – features other highlights from various regions of the country. Wooden tables with a pattern of the map of Portugal, tiled floors and windows with wooden blinds in blue, beige and dark brown, and kitchen-island in the centre of the restaurant, with baskets of vegetables plonked around, give the restaurant a cosy feel. The restaurant also has an outdoor terrace, by the hotel swimming pool, which is where my partner and I enjoyed our dinner.

Even though the night was chilly, we opted for a pitcher of fruity sangria to wash down our food with. To begin with, we shared a platter of batter-fried croquettes with tender shredded beef, crusted shrimp cake with cheese oozing out, and small chicken pies. The portions are rather big, and so we shared mains as well. These included a Portuguese specialty (Bacalhau confitado with bras), a cod fillet seeped in olive oil, potato mashed with flaked cod, and dried olives. The warm mashed potato with cod was a bit salty, and while I demolished both scoops on my plate, my partner merely nibbled on it. We also shared pan-fried lamb chops – made medium rare to suit our taste – with sweet mashed potato, sautéed mushrooms, caramelised dates and jus. This was one of our favourites, as the lamb chops were juicy, while the sweet potato and dates gave it a sweet touch. For desserts, we had to try the classic Pastas de Nata – a hard shell tart with gooey custard cream that's flambéed on top – which tasted exactly like what I'd had in Portugal, and rabanadas, deep fried bread on a bed of chocolate mousse with oodles of cinnamon powder, sugar and flaked toasted almonds sprinkled over, which my partner enjoyed very much.

If you want to go: Around Dhs250 for two, excluding drinks. Call 04-3977444.

- Nicola Monteath

Best for:
A traditional,
home-style
meal



What about *Ladies Night*?

Join us Thursday nights at K-West, Kempinski Hotel & Residences Palm Jumeirah for 'What about Ladies Night?'

Every Thursday, ladies can enjoy exclusively designed free beverages from 8pm to 11pm as well as buy one get one free on other selected refreshments. With a pianist playing the latest tunes and a vivacious atmosphere, you definitely won't be asking your friends 'What About Ladies Night?'
You'll be telling them to meet you there.

For reservations, please call +9714 444 2000 or visit www.kempinski.com/palmjumeirah



Flavours of the month

Our pick of the best restaurant offers, promotions and deals this month.

✴ Coastal flavours

Transport yourself to the south of Italy at Positano, one of Dubai's newest Italian restaurants. Exposed faux-brick walls set the tone for the relaxed dining you can expect here, whether it's the handmade pastas or the thin-crust pizzas. While its specialty is certainly fresh seafood-style cuisine from the Amalfi coast (don't miss their crispy calamari), their vegetarian and meat dishes – think veal ossobucco – are no less tempting, as are the city views.

À la carte menu, call 04-4143000.



✴ Creative menus

SushiArt, DIFC, have collaborated with French chef Joël Robuchon to launch a mouthwatering menu of seven creations featuring crispy lobster maki with banana yuzu sauce, a spicy ebi roll with California shrimp tempura, spicy tuna, yuzu sauce and kosho, spicy cucumber salad and a salmon tartare.

Available daily, call 800-220.

✴ Taste of the Levant

Grab a bunch of friends and head to Mezza House to try their new menu items which includes crab salad, beetroot hummous, and a selection of fusion dishes such as Turkish sojouk, veal shakshouka and halloumi with mushrooms.

Available daily, call 04-4205444.



✴ Asian specialties

The Thai Kitchen at Park Hyatt Dubai will be offering a congee promotion this month, which includes a choice of two congee (a rice porridge dish) set menus featuring pandan and taro congee. The menu will also include sharing dishes such as stir-fried prawns with garlic and pepper; spicy, crispy cat fish salad; and duck simmered in five spice sauce, ending with a Thai dessert.

Available on Saturday and Sunday evenings, Dhs160 for person. Call 04-3172222.

✴ Seal the deal over lunch

Discuss business at Ichu, Radisson Royal Hotel Dubai over a three-course business lunch. The menu includes miso soup, tuna and salmon tartare or wagyu beef tataki with truffle sauce for appetisers, miso eggplant or grilled vegetables for the second course, and grilled miso salmon on rice, spicy chicken on rice with grilled vegetables or vegetable stir-fried noodles for mains.

Available daily (except Fridays) for Dhs100 per person. Call 04-3080550.

✴ Thursday indulgences

Kick-start your weekend at the Thursday Tapas Supper at Umai, The Oberoi Dubai, to feast on sushi and sashimi from the live cooking stations, teppenyaki from the sizzling grill, dim sum, à la carte dishes for mains, and tapas such as dynamite shrimp wonton, pandan leaf fried chicken, soft shell crab with chimichurri sauce, fresh oysters and foie gras with teriyaki sauce. For desserts, dunk marshmallows into the chocolate fountains or try the mandarin mousse with vanilla bean cream, yuzu spheres and caramel soil.

Dhs320 per person, call 04-4441444.



* Stylish alfresco

Loving the great weather? You can enjoy it even more at the newly opened rooftop lounge Azura at The St. Regis Abu Dhabi, which spans over two levels and offers views of the Corniche and Arabian Gulf. Try a selection of Mediterranean and Arabic dishes from their wide menu, such as grilled shish kebab, jumbo shrimps and smoked salmon panini, as well as a variety of cocktails while listening to jazz tunes – perfect for a laid-back evening!

Available daily, call 02-6944444.

* Nutritious platters

Balance Café at Oasis Centre is hosting a Bake festival, where you can indulge in three-course meals themed under different categories, such as the Asian platter of baked pumpkin and green salad tossed with sesame dressing; baked crab meat with fish spring rolls and jalapeno salad; and a ricotta tart with ginger glaze. A Mediterranean platter of vegetable and seafood delights, a French platter, and an Ayurvedic baked platter with stuffed bottle gourd marinated in tangy mustard tofu-crumble cumin curry sauce plus an oat bread pudding scented with cardamom, are also available.

Available until January 10, from Dhs55 per platter. Call 04-5154051.



* Chinese New Year festivities

- Celebrate the occasion at Zheng He's, Mina A'Salam Hotel, Madinat Jumeirah, with a special menu which includes a selection of duck and seafood dishes, amongst others.

From Dhs188 per person, from January 26 to February 1. Call 04-3666730.

- Take the family to Na3Na3 at The Address Dubai Mall to savour a buffet of traditional, festive dishes such as Yee Sang – a raw fish salad – dim sums, noodles and mandarin orange ice tea.

January 31, call 04-8883444.

* Globetrotting breakfast

Kris Kros are now open for breakfast! Begin your day with appetising dishes such as baked eggs and halloumi, za'atar with veggies or a chocolate and mozzarella wrap and a selection of egg dishes including Florentine, eggs benedict and Spanish omelette.

Available daily until 1pm, call 04-4539994.

* Get crabby!

Claw BBQ, Crabshack and Grill at Souk Al Bahar has revealed The Beast challenge. If you, or someone you know, loves a big, meaty burger, head there to demolish a 6 pound burger topped with lettuce, tomato, fried onions, pickles and chilli fries in under 30 minutes, to get the meal for free – and your name on a wall plaque!

Dhs295 per person, call 04-4322300.

* Spanish mania

Seville's is starting 2014 with a new chef, Joan Mico, who has launched a menu brimming with authentic specialties such as calamares fritos, the all-new chicken flamenquines – a tapas dish – and paella de langosta, a paella dish with spiny lobster.

Call 04-3244100.

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The Doha diaries

Our Doha-based columnist has his finger on the pulse of the city's foodie scene.

The latest food news and happenings in the city.

Eating healthy? Yes, you can!

For far too long, Doha has lived with the disreputable label of being an unhealthy city. It's easy to see why. The painful lack of sidewalks fuels a driving culture to the point where some venues clearly designed for strolling, offer golf cart service to ferry people around.

Then there's the food. Collectively, Dohanians – a term I use to fondly describe myself and fellow residents – unite around our nosh. We dine out several times a week, bump into colleagues at the most unlikely shawarma shacks, and inevitably catch up with friends over a plate of something or another.

And that something or another is more often than not, drenched in creamy, heavenly, calorie-laden goodness. Far from the vegan-chic societies of far, far away, Doha seems reluctant to move on from the culinary traditions of yesteryear where quantity is espoused as a symbol of hospitality, and nutrition is ignored in favour of flavour.

It used to be that if you were on a regime to shed some poundage, eating out would be problematic. Looking for a light salad? Careful it doesn't come pre-dressed with a mayo-based dressing or is topped with deep-fried starches. Think the grilled salmon is the healthiest route? Don't forget that it's sitting on a bed of no-holds mashed potatoes and lemon butter sauce. Just recently, a friend ordered a quinoa risotto that the menu categorised under 'healthy alternative'. It may as well been called melted cheese stew – clearly scrumptious, but also the absolute antithesis to its advertised status.

That said, the New Year is all about reinventions. Now more than ever, Doha is seeking to shake off its nutritionally irresponsible image. And quite a few restaurants are forging the way.

Jones the Grocer has a lineup of salads that tick the boxes to fill you up without weighing you down; I'm a personal fan of the pumpkin and feta. The current seasonal menu at the W Hotel's Spice Market features a crispy grain salad with tamarind vinaigrette – so light and wholesome, you could even devour two orders, absolutely guilt-free. Another favourite of mine is the seafood paella served every Saturday at The Ritz-Carlton Living Room – a shining example of delicious nourishment.

I'd be the first to admit that going for the healthier option is neither the easiest nor most natural path for me. It'd take a miracle for me to say no to a chocolate concoction or a sinful tart, in lieu of the dessert fruit salad. But what is important is, I have these options now. So if your resolution in 2014 is to eat healthy, rest easy that you won't go hungry in Doha.

- Gerald Tan is a Doha-based TV journalist and dessert-loving foodie. Follow his culinary journal on his blog www.boulangerry.com

Afternoon treats

The Torch Tea Garden, which opens this month at The Torch Doha, is the place to head to for tea-infused mocktails such as black tea sangria and wild rose-ginger fizz, or the afternoon tea which includes finger sandwiches, strawberry pavlova and dark chocolate triangle mud pie, amongst other sweets.

QR135, call +974-44465600.



Perfect match

Spend the evening with a loved one at Astor Grill, The St. Regis Doha, and indulge in the Meat and Vine tasting. On offer are five meat dishes and a variety of wines that beautifully complement the premium cuts of meat served.

QR375 per person on January 28, call +974-44460106.



Sushi surprise

Gather a bunch of friends next weekend and head to Choices at Oryx Rotana, to feast on unlimited sushi, sashimi and yakitori grills, followed by an extensive selection of desserts. Saturday evenings, from QR200 per person, call +974-44023333.



Italian specialties

Treat your taste buds to a variety of risottos at the risotto promotion taking place in January at Cucina The Italian Kitchen, Renaissance Doha City Center Hotel. Try the risotto with black ink, shrimp, vegetables and saffron. Those looking for a sweet ending can also try the innovative risotto dessert. Available from January 14 -27, call +974-44196100.




 PLANTATION

MAGNIFIQUE CHEESE NIGHT

Plantation lounge has a story to tell when it comes to a fine selection of cheeses. Artisanal farms in France send us more than 20 different types every week, to let you discover new flavours and relish some true classics. Treat yourself to a spread of cheese perfectly paired with reds and whites under the sounds of our resident DJ every Wednesday from 7pm to 11pm.

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What *and how* you will be

We asked a panel of experts what the top food trends are for this year. By Sudeshna Ghosh.

SUPERFOODS

Eating healthier seems to be becoming of paramount importance – and about time too – with growing awareness in the region on diet-related health conditions. And that doesn't just mean fewer calories or less fat, eating more nutrient-dense food is the way forward. Superfoods such as goji berries, açai berries, Camu Camu, Matcha tea, and chia seeds, whilst already popular in many western countries, like many other things, have taken a while to catch on here. But 2014 will be the year that all changes. "I think the key trend for this year is going to be about implementing more superfoods into the diet," says Becky Balderstone, founder of Ripe Food and Crafts markets. "More information is becoming available surrounding the health benefits from studies, which will drive awareness and trial towards this trend."

Chef Emily Herbert, executive chef of new healthy food restaurant Ultra Brasserie, says, "People are becoming more conscious about food, and as a consequence, superfoods are definitely on people's radars now. More availability of superfoods such as quinoa, and healthy grains like barley and freekeh, in supermarkets means people are becoming interested in eating and cooking with them. Sardines are another nutrient-packed fish that I think will become the new salmon. These have been trending everywhere else in the world and I think now is the time when it hits this region."



KALE Local, organic kale, available in most farmers' markets here, will be *the* ingredient to cook with.



If 2013 was the year that Brazilian restaurants seemed to be opening up in Dubai faster than you could say 'churrasco', then, with the Olympics and football World Cup hitting Brazil in the next couple of years, and Peru winning world's leading culinary destination at the World Travel Awards this year, Latin American cuisine will continue to have more clout – not just in the region but around the world. "The flavours of Latin American cuisine have become very prominent throughout the regional dining scene with an increasing number of restaurants offering pan-Latin tastes and hospitality," says Simon Lazarus, vice president of food and beverage, Hilton Worldwide Middle East and Africa. "Diners will see more sharing options on menus, and the opportunity to experience traditional Latin American 'dining' entertainment including energetic live music performances. This is a trend we can expect to see continue through 2014."

Sustainable cuisine

It's been a burgeoning trend in the region for the last few years but now it looks like it will really start to be taken seriously. What started out as a solitary farmers' market in 2010 has become a movement getting everyone from restaurants to supermarkets and consumers involved, with an increasing focus on local, farm-fresh, organic and traceable food. "These seem to be at the heart of many new start up restaurants and there are at least three suppliers of veg boxes at the moment. I think that 2014 will see this trend continue which is great news for health, taste, choice and food security," says Mycuaastardpie.com food blogger Sally Prosser. "Choices for buying produce and eating good food using local, organic ingredients will be greater in 2014, but for real choice to continue, I hope people will support those truly committed to this ideology for reasons of sustainability rather than to drive their bottom line."

Dave Reeder, Editor of Pro Chef magazine adds, "We think there will be a continued growth in the farm-to-home table market, with more and more residents realising that flavour and cost-savings can be easily achieved by growing your own – a balcony may not feed a family, but will provide a good variety of produce. Local ingredients will sadly, still be limited on restaurant menus due to lack of consistency and quality concerns."

eating in 2014!

BIG PREDICTION

TAPAS

The latter part of 2013 saw an explosion of sorts when it comes to Spanish tapas restaurants opening up in Dubai – whether it was Kempinski Mall of the Emirates' Salero, or El Sur at Westin Dubai Mena Seyahi. As these brand new restaurants settle into their niches, this year will see the launches of more such outlets celebrating the joys of sharing-style tapas and Spanish flavours, starting with Cielo, set to open at the Dubai Creek Golf & Yacht Club. "For long under-represented in the local market, authentic Spanish food is going to be big," says Dave.

Not just Spanish cuisine, the tapas concept of sharing certainly seems to be catching on in popularity. According to Michael Kitts, Director of Culinary Arts at The Emirates Academy of Hospitality Management, "The sharing experience is just a nice way for customers to experience what a restaurant offers, in a casual atmosphere. Look at the success of La Petit Maison and Zuma, to name a few. And from a business point of view, I think people are more likely to have that 'naughty' second plate because the first was so good!"



FOOD INTOLERANCES Not only will more gluten-, lactose- and dairy-free products become available, but restaurants will start catering to these requirements more, with gluten-free bread options on offer, and either dishes suitable for those with allergies or intolerances on all menus or in some cases, entire menus that are 'food-tolerant'.



LOCAL FOOD

For far too long, Arabic food only meant Lebanese grills (delicious as they are) and little else. It has taken a long time coming, but with the success of the recently held Dubai World Hospitality Championships and the Royal Household's support, Emirati cuisine is finally having a moment. According to Uwe Micheel, President of the Emirates Culinary Guild, "At the DWHC, we saw traditional cooking techniques from local housewives being showcased. This is the way forward – who can we learn more from, than mothers? As chefs, we were able to see a lot of family recipes that we hadn't had a chance to before." From Arabic restaurants tentatively testing the waters of Emirati food by introducing some local dishes, to Mandi restaurants becoming all the rage last year, this year will see Dubai's first five star Emirati restaurant open at the Radisson Blu Hotel Dubai Deira Creek, where Uwe Micheel is also Culinary Director. "We will be able to offer the real Emirati flavours to our guests in dishes like Margougat Al Dijaj, Thareed Al-Khudar or Khameer on the menu," says Uwe.

Keeping it casual

While the UAE is very good at doing superlative dining experiences with the whitest linens and the sparkliest chandeliers, diners may be experiencing something of luxury fatigue – which has sparked the rise of less formal, and more relaxed restaurants that still offer five-star quality food. So, we're talking Table 9 by Nick and Scott here, not Bu Qtair! With rising food costs, and people demanding more for their money, a number of new, independent restaurants are set to redefine dining out. "Whilst not yet being at the stage of NYC or London, we expect locally developed, chef-driven outlets to grow in popularity," says Dave.

Michael agrees, saying, "I think the fine dining 'niche' gets smaller year on year and the paying public want a more laid back approach to dining out without all the pomp & ceremony, unless it's for a special night out."

Food blogger Debbie Steadman, of therealgeordiearmani.com fame, adds, "I feel that people are starting to hunt out the small, independently owned eateries that have something different to offer. There are many good standalone eateries that have opened up in Dubai, and I predict many more on the horizon for 2014."

THE EXPERTS



Becky Balderstone



Dave Reeder



Michael Kitts



Sally Prosser



Simon Lazarus



Uwe Micheel



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Home Cooking

Inspiring recipes for easy everyday meals and stylish weekend entertaining



Make it tonight

Cook something new midweek with these five easy recipes.

Recipes KATY GREENWOOD Photographs SAM STOWELL

Jerk chicken burger

SERVES 2 • PREP 10 MINS PLUS

MARINATING • COOK 10 MINS **Easy** 

Low cal **Low fat** **Vit C** **1 of 5-a-day** **Good for you**

2 skinless chicken breasts

Few thyme sprigs, leaves picked

1 tbsp olive oil

2 tsp jerk seasoning

juice 1 lime

2 large bread rolls

½ small mango, stoned, peeled and sliced

1 tomato, sliced

1 Little Gem heart, shredded

2 tbsp mayonnaise and ketchup to serve (optional)

1 Put the chicken breasts in between pieces of cling film and bash with a rolling pin to flatten. Mix together the thyme, oil, jerk seasoning and half the lime juice in a bowl. Add the chicken and

leave to marinate for 5 mins.

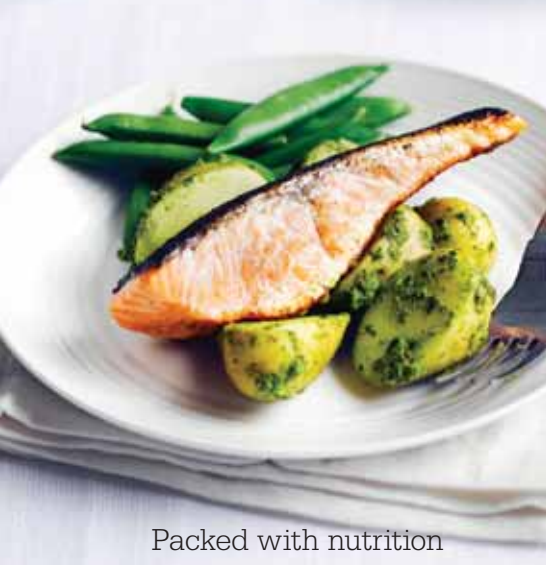
2 Heat a griddle pan until hot and cook the chicken for 4-5 mins each side or until cooked through. Remove from the heat. Meanwhile, toast the cut sides of the buns for 1-2 mins.

3 Put the chicken on the buns and top with the mango, tomato and a handful of lettuce. Squeeze over the rest of the lime and top with mayo and ketchup, if you like.

PER SERVING 417 kcals, protein 38g, carbs 45g, fat 9g, sat fat 2g, fibre 4g, sugar 11g, salt 1.2g

Low-fat yet satisfying





Packed with nutrition

Salmon with salsa verde new potatoes

SERVES 2 (WITH LEFTOVER SALSA VERDE) ● PREP 10 MINS

● COOK 15 MINS **Easy** **Low cal**

Heart healthy **Gluten Free**

250g new potatoes, halved
2 salmon fillets, skin on, about 140g each
3 tbsp olive oil
1 shallot, roughly chopped
Small bunch of flat-leaf parsley, roughly chopped
Small bunch of basil, roughly chopped
2 tbsp capers
4 anchovies, roughly chopped
1 large garlic clove, roughly chopped
Juice of 1 lemon
Sugar snap peas, to serve (optional)

1 Put the potatoes in a pan of salted water, bring to the boil and cook for 15 mins or until tender.
2 Heat a non-stick frying pan over a high heat and cook the salmon, skin-side down, for 10 mins until the skin is crisp. Turn over and cook for another 4 mins.
3 Put the oil, shallots, parsley, basil, capers, anchovies, garlic and lemon juice in a small blender and whizz to a green sauce. Add seasoning to taste. Toss 2 tbsp of the sauce with the potatoes and serve with the salmon and sugar snap peas, if you like.

PER SERVING 384 kcals, protein 31g, carbs 21g, fat 20g, sat fat 3g, fibre 2g, sugar 1g, salt 0.5g

LEFTOVERS

Serve the remaining sauce with grilled chicken, or stir it into mashed potatoes.



Full-of-flavour
vegetarian supper

Spiced broccoli with paneer

SERVES 2 ● PREP 10 MINS

● COOK 10 MINS **Easy** **V**

Folate **Fibre** **Vit C** **1 of 5-a-day** **Gluten Free**

1 large head of broccoli, broken into florets
1 tbsp olive oil
225g pack paneer, sliced
1 tsp garam masala
1 garlic clove, finely chopped
1 red chilli, deseeded and finely chopped
Zest and juice of 1 lemon
Naan bread, to serve

1 Cook the broccoli in a large pan of boiling salted water for 3-4 mins. Save a little of the cooking water, then drain broccoli and set aside in the colander.
2 Heat the oil in a large frying pan over a medium heat. Season, then fry the paneer for 2-3 mins on each side until golden. Move the paneer to the edge of the pan and add the garam masala, garlic, chilli and reserved cooking water. Cook for 2 mins, then return broccoli to the pan, with the lemon zest and juice. Toss everything together to heat through and serve with warm naan breads.

PER SERVING 529 kcals, protein 37g, carbs 7g, fat 40g, sat fat 21g, fibre 8g, sugar 4g, salt 1.3g >>



Treat for two

Japanese-style beef bowl

SERVES 2 • PREP 5 MINS • COOK 10 MINS **Easy** **Low cal** **1 of 5-a-day**

- 1 tbsp olive oil
- 1 onion, thickly sliced
- 250g thin cut steak or frying steak, thinly sliced
- 4 tbsp teriyaki sauce
- 1 tbsp finely grated ginger
- 1 garlic clove, finely grated
- 250g pouch microwave long-grain rice
- 2 spring onions, sliced
- Pickled ginger to serve (optional)

LEFTOVERS Use leftover teriyaki as a marinade for chicken or salmon, or mix with rice vinegar, to taste, and stir through fried rice.

- 1** Heat the oil in a frying pan and cook the onion for 5 mins over a medium heat until soft. Turn up the heat and add the steak to the pan. Stir-fry with the onion for 2 mins. Mix together the teriyaki sauce, ginger and garlic, and stir into the meat with 1 tbsp water. Cook for 1-2 mins more, then remove from the heat.
 - 2** Cook rice following pack instructions, then divide between 2 bowls. Spoon over the meat, onions and any sauce, then top with the spring onions. Serve with some pickled ginger, if you like.
- PER SERVING 488 kcals, protein 34g, carbs 55g, fat 14g, sat fat 4g, fibre 3g, sugar 21g, salt 2.7g

MAKE IT **Gluten Free** Use tamari sauce instead of teriyaki sauce.



Great way to use up bread that's past its best

Leek & tomato egg bread bake

SERVES 4 • PREP 10 MINS

• COOK 25 MINS **Easy** **V** **Calcium** **Folate**

- 25g butter, plus extra for greasing
- 200g crusty white bread, torn into chunks (all the better if it's a few days old)
- 2 leeks, thinly sliced
- 2 garlic cloves, finely chopped
- 100g cherry tomatoes, halved
- 4 eggs
- 200ml milk
- 100g strong cheddar, grated
- Ketchup, to serve (optional)

- 1** Heat oven to 200C/180C fan. Grease a baking dish and fill with the torn bread. Heat the butter in a large pan until it starts to foam. Add the leeks and garlic, and cook over a medium heat for 5 mins, stirring as you go. Spoon softened leek mixture over the bread and top with cherry tomatoes.
 - 2** Beat together the eggs, milk and cheddar. Season, then pour over the bread and bake for 15-20 mins until golden and puffy. Serve with ketchup, if you like.
- PER SERVING 416 kcals, protein 21g, carbs 29g, fat 24g, sat fat 12g, fibre 4g, sugar 6g, salt 1.5g **GF**

A photograph of two children with tiger face paint. The child in the foreground is a boy with white face paint and black stripes, looking upwards with his mouth open. The child in the background is a girl with yellow face paint and black stripes, smiling. They are at a fair with colorful, blurred structures in the background.

MAZINA

GENERATION CREATION

Saturday FAMILY BRUNCH AT MAZINA

Bring the family together this January for a brunch experience with a difference at Mazina, The Address Dubai Marina. Join in the excitement and paint the town red with our Generation Creation activity of the month - Face Painting. Participate as a team and get creative to win great prizes!

Enjoy an extensive buffet of mouthwatering international favourites and fun activities for our younger diners, including face painting, a bouncy castle and Wii games.

Date: 18th January 2014

Time: 12.30 pm to 3.30 pm

Special price: AED 220 including soft drinks

Children aged between 7-12 years enjoy meals at half price and under 6 years dine with our compliments



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T: +971 4 436 7777 E: DINE.DUBAIMARINA@THEADDRESS.COM
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WHERE *life* HAPPENS

5 ways to jazz up chicken

Try our simple ideas to transform a pack of skinless chicken breasts into a delicious family supper.

Recipes MYLES WILLIAMSON Photographs ADRIAN LAWRENCE

Tandoori

SERVES 4 • PREP 5 MINS PLUS MARINATING

• COOK 15 MINS **Easy**  **Low cal**  **Low fat**  **Good for you**

Mix 2 **tsp garam masala**, ½ **tsp turmeric**, a **3cm piece ginger**, grated, **2 chopped garlic cloves**, **250ml natural yogurt** and some seasoning. Add **4 chicken breasts** and chill for at least 1 hr, or overnight. Heat oven to 220C/200C fan.

Put the chicken on a rack set over a baking tray and top with the yoghurt mix. Bake for 10 mins, then grill for 5 mins more until cooked through and charred. Serve with **rice** and **mango chutney**.

PER SERVING 196 kcals, protein 34g, carbs 6g, fat 4g, sat fat 2g, fibre none, sugar 5g, salt 0.3g

Herb-crusted

SERVES 4 • PREP 5 MINS • COOK 15 MINS

Easy  **Low cal**  **Low fat**  **Good for you**



Heat oven to 200C/180C fan. In a food processor, blitz **3 tbsp parsley**, **2 tsp rosemary** and **2 tsp thyme leaves** (or chop and mix by hand). Add **75g white breadcrumbs**, blitz again and season.

Spread **1 tbsp Dijon mustard** over **4 chicken breasts**, then press on the herb crust. Bake for 15-20 mins until the crusts brown slightly and the chicken is cooked through.

PER SERVING 208 kcals, protein 33g, carbs 14g, fat 2g, sat fat none, fibre 1g, sugar 1g, salt 0.8g

Mozzarella, pancetta & thyme

SERVES 4 • PREP 10 MINS

• COOK 20 MINS **Easy**  **Low cal**  **Low fat**

Heat oven to 200C/180C fan.

Slice a **125g ball mozzarella** and use to top **4 chicken breasts**. Add a **thyme sprig** to each, then wrap each chicken breast with **2 slices pancetta** or **streaky bacon**.

Put the chicken on a baking tray, drizzle over **1 tbsp olive oil** and season. Bake for 15-20 mins, then grill for a few mins to crisp the pancetta, if needed.

PER SERVING 365 kcals, protein 42g, carbs 1g, fat 21g, sat fat 10g, fibre none, sugar none, salt 1.6g

Satay

SERVES 4 • PREP 10 MINS • COOK 20 MINS

Easy  **Low cal**

Heat oven to 180C/160C fan. Pulse a **3cm piece ginger**, **1 deseeded red chilli**, **1 garlic clove**, **2 tbsp soy sauce**, **4 tbsp peanut butter** and a **handful of coriander leaves** in a food processor until smooth (or chop and mix by hand).

Spread the sauce over **4 chicken breasts** and sprinkle with **chopped peanuts**. Bake for 15-20 mins until the chicken is cooked through. Serve with rice and **sweet chilli sauce**.

PER SERVING 271 kcals, protein 36g, carbs 4g, fat 13g, sat fat 3g, fibre 1g, sugar 2g, salt 1.7g

Cacciatore

SERVES 4 • PREP 10 MINS

• COOK 45 MINS **Easy**  **Low cal**  **Low fat**  **1 of 5-a-day**

Good for you

Fry **1 sliced onion** and **2 sliced garlic cloves** in **1 tsp olive oil** until softened. Add **400g can of chopped tomatoes**, **2 tbsp chopped rosemary leaves** and seasoning, and cook for 10-15 mins until thickened. Heat oven to 180C/160C fan. Put **4 chicken breasts** on a baking tray, top with the sauce and bake for 15-20 mins until cooked through. Serve scattered with **small handful of basil leaves**, with your **favourite veg**, if you like.

PER SERVING 171 kcals, protein 32g, carbs 6g, fat 2g, sat fat 1g, fibre 2g, sugar 4g, salt 0.3g **GF**

Cacciatore



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Keep up your good intentions all day long with this selection of healthy breakfasts, snacks, lunches and suppers.

Breakfasts



Apple & sultana porridge ▲

SERVES 4 ● PREP 5 MINS ● COOK 10 MINS Easy V Low fat 1 of 5-a-day

Put **100g porridge oats** and **500ml skimmed milk** in a small pan and cook, stirring, for 3 mins until almost creamy. Stir in **4 cored and diced apples** and **100g sultanas**, then cook for 2 mins more or until the porridge is thick and creamy and the apples just tender. Ladle into bowls, sprinkle with **1 tbsp soft brown sugar** and eat immediately.

PER SERVING 256 kcals, protein 9g, carbs 47g, fat 2g, sat fat 1g, fibre 4g, sugar 34g, salt 0.2g

Peanut butter & banana on toast ▲

SERVES 1 ● PREP 5 MINS ● COOK 5 MINS Easy V Low fat Folate 1 of 5-a-day

Toast **2 slices granary bread** and slice **1 small banana**. Layer banana on one slice of toast and dust with **½ tsp cinnamon**. Spread the second slice with **1 tbsp crunchy peanut butter**. Sandwich the two together and eat straight away.

PER SERVING 307 kcals, protein 11g, carbs 45g, fat 9g, sat fat 2g, fibre 4g, sugar 18g, salt 1g



Peanut butter & banana on toast

Salmon & chive bagel topper ▲

SERVES 4 ● PREP 8 MINS ● NO COOK

Easy V Low fat Heart healthy Good for you

Flake **1 cooked and cooled salmon fillet** (about 100g) into a bowl. Add **200g reduced-fat soft cheese**, **zest and juice of ½ lemon**, **2 tbsp snipped chives** and plenty of **black pepper**. Mash everything together with a fork, then keep chilled until ready to serve. Lightly toast **4 halved bagels**, then spread with the salmon mixture and top each with a **handful watercress**. Eat straight away.

PER SERVING 368 kcals, protein 24g, carbs 39g, fat 11g, sat fat 4g, fibre 6g, sugar 6g, salt 1.5g



Lunches

Spicy tuna & cottage cheese jacket ▶

SERVES 1 ● PREP 10 MINS ● COOK 1

HR **Easy** **Low cal** **Low fat**

Mix a 225g can tuna, drained, with ½ chopped red chilli, 1 sliced spring onion, a handful halved cherry tomatoes and ½ small bunch coriander, chopped. Split 1 cooked medium-sized jacket potato and fill with the tuna mix and ½ x 300g tub low-fat cottage cheese.

PER SERVING 439 kcals, protein 64g, carbs 33g, fat 5g, sat fat 2g, fibre 3g, sugar 7g, salt 1.7g



Lemony three bean & feta salad ◀

SERVES 3 ● PREP 5 MINS

● COOK 12 MINS **Easy** **Low cal** **V**

Low fat **Low cal** **Folate** **Fibre** 3 of 5-a-day

Cook 200g trimmed green beans and 200g frozen edamame beans in boiling water for 3 mins. Drain, cool under cold running water, drain again and mix with 400g can rinsed and drained cannellini beans and ½ red onion, chopped. Add juice 1 lemon, pinch caster sugar and 1 tsp sesame seeds. Season. Scatter 85g crumbled feta on top.

PER SERVING 318 kcals, protein 23g, carbs 31g, fat 12g, sat fat 5g, fibre 7g, sugar 7g, salt 1.7g

Turkey & avocado on toast ▶

SERVES 2 ● PREP 10 MINS ● COOK 5 MINS **Easy** **Low fat** **Good for you**

Halve and stone 1 avocado, then scrape out the flesh into a bowl. Squeeze in juice of ½ a lime, season, then mash roughly with a fork. Toast 4 small slices ciabatta bread, spread with the mashed avocado, top with 100g turkey slices and finish with ground black pepper. Serve with a large handful of your favourite salad leaves.

PER SERVING 208 kcals, protein 15g, carbs 12g, fat 11g, sat fat 2g, fibre 2g, sugar 1g, salt 1.3g >>





◆ Home-made Cajun tortillas

SERVES 4 ● PREP 10 MINS

● COOK 7 MINS **Easy** **F** **Low fat** **Good for you**

Heat oven to 180C/160C fan. Mix **2 tbsp oil** with **1 tbsp Cajun spice mix**. Brush the spiced oil over **8 plain tortillas**, stacking the tortillas on top of each other as you go. Cut the stack into 8 wedges. Separate the wedges and spread out on baking sheets and bake for 6-7 mins until golden and crisp.

PER SERVING 385 kcals, protein 9g, carbs 71g, fat 7g, sat fat 1g, fibre 4g, sugar 2g, salt 0.9g

Pea, mint & chilli dip ▼

SERVES 4 ● PREP 5 MINS PLUS

DEFROSTING ● NO COOK

Easy **F** **V** **Low fat** **Fibre** **Folate** **2 of 5-a-day**

400g frozen peas, defrosted

100g fat-free natural yoghurt

Juice of 1 lemon

1 tsp ground cumin

Small handful of mint leaves

1 small red chilli, chopped

4 wholemeal pitta breads

500g carrots, cut into batons

1 Whizz the peas, yoghurt, lemon juice, cumin, mint and chilli together in a food processor to a texture you like. Divide between plastic tubs to pack into lunchboxes, or tip into a serving bowl.

2 Lightly toast the pitas, then cut into wedges and serve with the dip and carrots.

PER SERVING 278 kcals, protein 15g, carbs 47g, fat 3g, sat fat 1g, fibre 12g, sugar 16g, salt 0.8g



Snacks

Chinese spiced seed mix ▼

SERVES 2 ● PREP 5 MINS

● COOK 12 MINS **Easy** **F** **V** **Fibre** **Iron**

Heat oven to 150C/130C fan. Whisk **1 egg white**, stir in **2 tsp Chinese five spice** and $\frac{1}{2}$ **tsp salt**, add **85g each of sunflower and pumpkin seeds** and stir to coat. Spread out on a lightly oiled baking sheet and bake for 12 mins.

PER SERVING 495 kcals, protein 21g, carbs 13g, fat 40g, sat fat 6g, fibre 6g, sugar 1g, salt 1.4g



Parmesan potato skins ▲

SERVES 4 ● PREP 10 MINS ● COOK 1

HR 15 MINS **Easy** **F** **Low fat** **Good for you**

Heat oven to 180C/160C fan. Bake **4 large baking potatoes** for 50-60 mins. Cool slightly then halve and scrape out the middles, leaving about 1cm of potato in the skins. Cut each skin into 3 and toss on a baking sheet with **1 tbsp olive oil**, $\frac{1}{2}$ **tsp cayenne pepper**, $\frac{1}{2}$ **tsp paprika**, $\frac{1}{2}$ **tsp salt** and **2 tbsp grated Parmesan** (or vegetarian alternative). Bake for a further 10-15 mins until crisp and golden.

PER SERVING 173 kcals, protein 5g, carbs 22g, fat 5g, sat fat 2g, fibre 5g, sugar 1g, salt 0.8gcv



Suppers



Miso chicken & rice soup ▲

SERVES 2 ● PREP 10 MINS ● COOK 10 MINS **Easy** **V** **Low fat** **Low cal** **1 of 5-a-day**

500g chicken stock
2 skinless chicken breasts
50g long-grain rice
8 Chantenay carrots, halved lengthways
2 tbsp miso paste
1 tbsp soy sauce
1 tbsp mirin
Spring onions, sliced

1 Bring the stock to a gentle boil in a medium saucepan. Add the chicken breasts and simmer for 8 mins until cooked through. Remove from the pan and shred the meat.

2 Add the rice and carrots to the hot stock. Bring back up to the boil, cover with a lid, then reduce the heat and cook for 10 mins until the rice is cooked and the carrots are tender.

3 Return the chicken to the pan and add the miso, soy and mirin. Scatter over the spring onions just before serving.

PER SERVING 274 kcals, protein 40g, carbs 21g, fat 2g, sat fat 1g, fibre 4g, sugar 10g, salt 3.1g

Courgette fritters ▶

SERVES 4 ● PREP 10 MINS ● COOK 6 MINS **Easy** **V** **Low fat** **Good for you**

Tip **50g plain flour** into a bowl. Make a well in the centre, break in **2 eggs**, then gradually whisk together, adding **50ml milk**, a little at a time, to make a smooth batter. Stir in **1 grated courgette** and season well. Heat **1 tbsp oil** in a non-stick frying pan. Add tbsps of mixture to make fritters, and cook for 2-3 mins on each side until lightly golden. Serve with **sweet chilli sauce**.

PER SERVING 119 kcals, protein 6g, carbs 10g, fat 6g, sat fat 1g, fibre 1g, sugar 2g, salt 0.1g



Open cottage cheese & pepper sandwich

SERVES 1 ● PREP 10 MINS

● NO COOK **Easy** **V** **Low fat** **Vit C**

140g cottage cheese
¼ red pepper, thinly sliced
Few basil leaves, torn
2 slices sourdough or wholemeal bread
Drizzle of balsamic vinegar (optional)

1 Layer the cottage cheese, red pepper and basil with some seasoning in a bowl or plastic container. Chill until needed.

2 Toast the bread and cool for 1 min, then give the cottage cheese mixture a quick mix and spoon on. Drizzle with balsamic vinegar, if you like, and eat straight away.

PER SERVING 316 kcals, protein 23g, carbs 40g, fat 7g, sat fat 3g, fibre 2g, sugar 8g, salt 1.8g **GF**





Hit your 5-a-day


A whole week's menu plan with delicious ways to pack your meals with fruit and veg.

Recipes ROSIE REYNOLDS Photographs STUART OVENDEN

BREAKFAST

Grapefruit, orange & apricot salad

SERVES 4 • PREP 10 MINS • NO COOK

Easy  V Low fat Vit C 2 of 5-a-day

2 grapefruits, peel and pith cut away
4 oranges, peel and pith cut away
4 apricots, stoned and sliced
1 tbsp clear honey

1 Segment the grapefruits and oranges into a large bowl to catch the juices. Stir in the apricots and honey, and serve.

PER SERVING 83 kcals, protein 2g, carbs 18g, fat none, sat fat none, fibre 4g, sugar 18g, salt none

LUNCH

Spicy bean & corn dip

SERVES 4 • PREP 10 MINS • NO COOK

Easy  V Low fat Fibre 2 of 5-a-day

395g can kidney beans in chilli sauce
400g can mixed beans, drained
326g can sweetcorn, drained
Small red onion, chopped
1 red chilli, deseeded and chopped
Small bunch of coriander, chopped
350g vegetable sticks and tortilla chips, to serve

1 In a food processor, whizz three-quarters of the kidney beans and half the mixed beans until smooth. Tip into a bowl and add the remaining ingredients with some seasoning. Serve with crunchy vegetable sticks and tortilla chips for dipping.

PER SERVING 128 kcals, protein 8g, carbs 19g, fat 1g, sat fat none, fibre 8g, sugar 7g, salt 2.4g



DINNER

Lamb kebabs & Greek salad

SERVES 4 • PREP 20 MINS PLUS MARINATING

• COOK 10 MINS Easy  Low cal 2 of 5-a-day

Juice of ½ lemon

2 tbsp olive oil

1 garlic clove, crushed

600g diced lamb leg

FOR THE SALAD

4 large tomatoes, chopped

1 cucumber, chopped

Handful of black olives, roughly chopped

200g pack feta, crumbled

Bunch of mint, chopped

1 Mix the lemon juice, olive oil and garlic in a mixing bowl. Pour half into a jug and set aside for later. Add the lamb to the bowl, stir to coat, then thread onto 8 small skewers. Pour over any excess marinade and let stand for 10 mins.

2 Meanwhile, mix all salad ingredients together, except the mint, and pour over the reserved lemon juice and oil mix.

3 Heat a griddle pan. Cook the lamb for 8 mins, turning every couple of mins, until cooked through and slightly charred. Mix the mint through the salad and serve immediately with the kebabs.

PER SERVING 495 kcals, protein 38g, carbs 5g, fat 36g, sat fat 16g, fibre 2g, sugar 4g, salt 2.2g



BREAKFAST

Malt loaf with banana & honey

SERVES 4 ● PREP 5 MINS ● COOK 2 MINS

Easy  Low fat  Vit C  2 of 5-a-day

1 x fruity malt loaf, sliced

4 bananas, sliced

Clear honey, to serve

500ml freshly squeezed orange juice,
to serve

1 Toast the malt loaf slices until warm and crisp at the edges. Divide the bananas over the malt loaf and drizzle with a tiny squeeze of honey. Enjoy with a glass of orange juice.

PER SERVING 307 kcals, protein 6g, carbs 67g, fat 2g, sat fat none, fibre 3g, sugar 40g, salt 0.4g



LUNCH

Sausages with warm red cabbage & beetroot slaw

SERVES 4 ● PREP 15 MINS

● COOK 30-35 MINS

Easy  Fibre  Iron  Vit C  3 of 5-a-day

8 pork or beef sausages

100ml balsamic vinegar

100g soft dark brown sugar

1 tbsp cumin seeds

140g mixed dried vine fruit,
such as currants, raisins and
sultanas1 red cabbage, about 800g/1lb
12oz, shredded

4 beetroot, about 350g, grated
4 chunks of baguette and English
mustard, to serve

1 Heat oven to 200C/180C fan. Put the sausages on a baking tray and cook for 30-35 mins or until cooked through and golden.

2 Meanwhile, put the vinegar, sugar, cumin and dried fruit into a large pan and gently heat until sugar dissolves. Bring to the boil, then bubble for 3 mins or until slightly reduced. Tip in the cabbage and beetroot, stir well, then cook for 10 mins more.

3 Serve as hot dogs in a baguette with the warm slaw and a little mustard.



PER SERVING 632 kcals, protein 18g, carbs 11g, fat 29g, sat fat 10g, fibre 10g, sugar 69g, salt 2.7g



DINNER

Spinach & chickpea curry

SERVES 4 ● PREP 5 MINS ● COOK 15 MINS

Easy  Low cal  Low fat  Fibre  Iron  Folate 2 of 5-a-day  Good for you

2 tbsp mild curry paste

1 onion, chopped

400g can cherry tomatoes

2 x 400g cans chickpeas, drained and
rinsed

250g bag baby leaf spinach

Squeeze of lemon juice

Basmati rice, to serve

1 Heat the curry paste in a large non-stick frying pan. Once it starts to split, add the onion and cook for 2 mins to soften. Tip in the tomatoes and bubble for 5 mins or until the sauce has reduced.

2 Add the chickpeas and some seasoning, then cook for 1 min more. Take off the heat, then tip in the spinach and allow the heat of the pan to wilt the leaves. Season, add the lemon juice, and serve with basmati rice.

PER SERVING 203 kcals, protein 9g, carbs 28g, fat 4g, sat fat none, fibre 6g, sugar 5g, salt 1.5g g >>





BREAKFAST

Crunchy fruit & nut cereal

SERVES 4 ● PREP 10 MINS ● COOK 10 MINS

Easy   Low fat 1 of 5-a-day

50g jumbo porridge oats
50g mixed nuts, roughly chopped
200g dried fruit
25g puffed rice cereal
Skimmed milk or fat-free yoghurt.

1 Heat oven to 180C/160C fan and scatter the porridge oats and mixed nuts on a baking sheet. Cook for 8-10 mins or until lightly golden.

2 Remove and cool, then mix the fruit with the puffed rice cereal. Serve with skimmed milk or fat-free yoghurt.

PER SERVING 280 kcals, protein 7g, carbs 46g, fat 7g, sat fat 1g, fibre 3g, sugar 33g, salt 0.1g

LUNCH

Spinach & courgette frittata

SERVES 4 ● PREP 15 MINS ● COOK 20 MINS

Easy   Low cal Folate 2 of 5-a-day Good for you

1 onion, sliced
1 tbsp olive oil
1 tsp dried chilli flakes
350g courgettes, sliced
200g bag spinach
125g ricotta
6 medium eggs

1 Fry an onion in olive oil in a large ovenproof frying pan until soft. Add the chilli flakes and courgettes, and cook for 5 mins more.

2 Tip the spinach into a large colander and pour over a kettle of boiling water. Cool under cold running water, then squeeze dry. Scatter spinach into the pan, then dot over the ricotta. Heat the grill to high.

3 Beat the eggs with seasoning, pour into the pan and cook until almost completely set. Finish under the grill for 3 mins or until golden and cooked through.

PER SERVING 211 kcals, protein 15g, carbs 6g, fat 15g, sat fat 5g, fibre 3g, sugar 5g, salt 0.5g



DINNER

Minced beef pie & minty mushy peas

SERVES 4 ● PREP 20 MINS ● COOK 45 MINS

Easy  Folate Fibre Iron 2 of 5-a-day

1 onion, chopped
350g carrots, chopped
3 celery sticks, chopped
1 tbsp olive oil
500g pack lean minced beef
2 tbsp tomato purée
1 tbsp Worcestershire sauce
350ml beef stock
1 egg, lightly beaten
375g ready-rolled puff pastry, quartered or left whole, depending on dishes used
350g frozen peas
1 tbsp mint sauce

1 Fry the onion, carrots and celery in the oil in a large frying pan until softened. Add the mince, increase heat and cook for 5 mins or until well browned. Stir in the tomato purée, Worcestershire sauce and stock. Simmer for 5 mins until the sauce has thickened slightly. Cool for 10 mins.

2 Heat oven to 200C/180C fan. Spoon the mixture into 4 individual pie dishes or one large dish. Brush the dish rims with egg, then lay the pastry on top and trim. Seal edges with a fork and brush the pastry with more egg. Poke a little hole in the top and cook for 25-30 mins or until the pastry is golden and risen.

3 Meanwhile, cook the peas in boiling water, then drain and mash with the mint sauce. Serve the pies with the hot peas on the side.

PER SERVING 731 kcals, protein 10g, carbs 51g, fat 39g, sat fat 17g, fibre 8g, sugar 14g, salt 1.6g >>





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BREAKFAST

Fruit compote

SERVES 4 ● PREP 5 MINS ● COOK

10 MINS **Easy** **Low fat** **Vit C** **2 of 5-a-day**

4 large plums, stoned and cut into wedges

200g punnet blueberries

Zest and juice of 1 orange

25g soft light brown sugar

150g punnet raspberries

Thick yoghurt and honey, to serve (optional)

1 Cook the plums and blueberries in a small pan with the orange zest and juice, sugar and 4 tbsp water until slightly softened but not mushy. Gently stir in the raspberries and cook for 1 min more.

2 Remove from the heat and let cool to room temperature. Serve with yoghurt and a drizzle of honey, if you like.

PER SERVING 98 kcals, protein 2g, carbs 22g, fat none, sat fat none, fibre 4g, sugar 21g, salt none

LUNCH

Griddled pear & blue cheese salad

SERVES 4 ● PREP 10 MINS ● COOK

15 MINS **Easy** **V** **2 of 5-a-day**

4 firm, ripe pears, sliced lengthways into 1cm slices

2 tbsp olive oil

1 tbsp white wine vinegar

1 tbsp honey

250g bag mixed salad leaves

150g pack blue cheese, crumbled
crusty bread, to serve (optional)

1 Put the pears in a bowl and drizzle with 1 tsp of the oil. Heat a griddle pan, then cook the pears, in batches, for 1 min on each side. Set aside to cool.

2 Mix the remaining oil, vinegar and honey. Toss the pears, leaves and cheese, divide between 4 plates and drizzle with the dressing. Serve with bread, if you like.

PER SERVING 259 kcals, protein 8g, carbs 19g, fat 17g, sat fat 8g, fibre 5g, sugar 19g, salt 1.2g



DINNER

Bean & pepper chilli

SERVES 4 ● PREP 15 MINS ● COOK

30 MINS **Easy** **V** **Low cal** **Low fat**

Heart healthy **Fibre** **Vit C** **3 of 5-a-day** **Good for you**

1 tbsp olive oil

1 onion, chopped

350g peppers, deseeded and sliced

1 tbsp each ground cumin, chilli powder and sweet smoked paprika

400g can kidney beans in chilli sauce

400g can mixed beans, drained

400g can chopped tomatoes
Rice, to serve (optional)

1 Heat the oil in a large pan. Add the onion and peppers, and cook for 8 mins until softened. Tip in the spices and cook for 1 min.

2 Tip in the beans and tomatoes, bring to the boil and simmer for 15 mins or until the chilli is thickened. Season and serve with rice, if you like.

PER SERVING 183 kcals, protein 11g, carbs 26g, fat 5g, sat fat 1g, fibre 12g, sugar 12g, salt 0.5g >>

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BREAKFAST

Veggie breakfast bakes

SERVES 4 ● PREP 15 MINS ● COOK 30 MINS

Easy   Low fat  Folate  3 of 5-a-day  Good for you

- 4 large field mushrooms
- 8 tomatoes, halved
- 1 garlic clove, thinly sliced
- 2 tsp olive oil
- 200g bag spinach
- 4 eggs

1 Heat oven to 200C/180C fan. Put the mushrooms and tomatoes into 4 ovenproof dishes. Divide garlic between the dishes,

drizzle over the oil and some seasoning, then bake for 10 mins.

2 Meanwhile, put the spinach into a large colander, then pour over a kettle of boiling water to wilt it. Squeeze out any excess water, then add the spinach to the dishes. Make a little gap between the vegetables and crack an egg into each dish. Return to the oven and cook for a further 8-10 mins or until the egg is cooked to your liking.

PER SERVING 127 kcals, protein 9g, carbs 5g, fat 8g, sat fat 2g, fibre 3g, sugar 5g, salt 0.4g



LUNCH

Mexican rice & bean salad

SERVES 4 ● PREP 20 MINS

● COOK 15 MINS Easy   Low cal  Vit C  Fibre  2 of 5-a-day  Good for you

- 175g basmati and wild rice
- 400g can mixed bean salad, drained and rinsed
- Bunch of spring onions, chopped
- 1 red pepper, deseeded and chopped
- 1 avocado, chopped

Juice of 1 lime, plus wedges to serve
1 tbsp Cajun spice mix
Small bunch of coriander, chopped

1 Cook the rice following pack instructions. Drain, then cool under cold running water until completely cold. Stir in beans, onions, pepper and avocado.

2 Mix the lime juice with the Cajun spice mix and some black pepper. Pour over the rice mix, stir in the coriander and serve with extra lime wedges.

PER SERVING 326 kcals, protein 11g, carbs 44g, fat 10g, sat fat 2g, fibre 6g, sugar 4g, salt none




- 2 tbsp plain flour
- 1 egg, beaten
- 100g garlic and herb dried breadcrumbs
- 4 frozen corn cobs
- Barbecue sauce, to serve

1 Mix the slaw ingredients together with some seasoning, then set aside. *This can be done up to a day in advance and chilled.* Bring a large pan of water to the boil, then cook the corn cobs for 8-10 mins until tender and cooked through.

2 Heat the grill to high. Pour the flour, egg and breadcrumbs out onto separate plates. Dip the chicken into the flour, then the egg, then coat in the breadcrumbs. Lay the chicken onto a baking sheet and grill for 2 mins on each side or until crispy and cooked through. Serve the crispy

chicken with the slaw and corn cobs, and a bowl of barbecue sauce to dunk on the side.

PER SERVING 331 kcals, protein 29g, carbs 45g, fat 4g, sat fat 1g, fibre 4g, sugar 12g, salt 0.7g 

DINNER

Crispy chicken & apple slaw

SERVES 4 ● PREP 15 MINS ● COOK 15 MINS

Easy  Low cal  Low fat  3 of 5-a-day 

FOR THE SLAW

- ½ white cabbage, shredded
- ½ small onion, finely sliced
- 4 celery sticks, sliced
- 2 Granny Smith apples, quartered, cored and thinly sliced
- 1 tbsp white wine vinegar
- 200g pot fat-free Greek yoghurt

FOR THE CHICKEN

- 2 cooked chicken breasts, thinly sliced



A good catch

Recipes and advice to make light work of cooking with sustainable seafood. Photographs PETER CASSIDY

Punchy flavours

Grilled mackerel with harissa & coriander couscous

SERVES 4 • PREP 20 MINS

• COOK 15 MINS **Easy**

Mackerel are best bought whole and filleted to order so you can tell just how fresh they are.

4 small whole mackerel, gutted and filleted
3 tbsp extra virgin olive oil
Grated zest and juice of 1 lime, plus wedges to serve
1 bunch spring onions, finely sliced
2 tbsp harissa paste (more depending on taste)
140g couscous
500ml hot vegetable stock
3 tbsp chopped coriander, plus sprigs to serve

1 Brush each fillet 2-3 times with a little of the olive oil and rub with the lime zest. Season and sprinkle with half the lime juice then marinate for 5 mins.
2 Heat the remaining olive oil in a large pan. Add half the onions and harissa, and stir over a medium heat for 2-3 mins. Stir in the couscous and toss to coat with the harissa. Add the hot stock, cover and remove from the heat. Stand for 5 mins, fluff with a fork and stir in the remaining spring onions, coriander, lime juice and some seasoning. Heat the grill.
3 Grill the mackerel for 3-4 mins on each side or until the flesh is opaque. Divide the couscous between 4 plates and slide a fillet on top. Serve with lime wedges.

PER SERVING 502 kcs, protein 31g, carbs 21g, fat 33g, sat fat 6g, fibre 1g, sugar 3g, salt 0.65g

WHY CHOOSE MACKEREL?

This oil-rich fish is in plentiful supply and is an excellent source of omega-3 fatty acids, essential for brain development and reducing the risk of strokes. When buying, look out for line-caught fish, which is a selective method of capture and more environmentally friendly. Mackerel is a good choice in winter as it is in season and at its best with rich, meaty flesh.

Try our
cover
recipe!

Spicy Thai prawn noodles

SERVES 4 ● PREP 15 MINS ●

COOK 15 MINS **Easy**  **Low fat**

Atlantic prawns are not as big as farmed varieties, but they have a good flavour.

200g Thai rice noodles

1 tbsp sesame oil

2 eggs, beaten

1 red chilli, finely chopped

1 thumb-size piece ginger, grated

450g peeled cooked Gulf prawns

1 tbsp soy sauce

Small bunch of coriander, roughly chopped

½ small bunch mint, roughly chopped

Zest and juice of 1 lime

Small handful of roasted peanuts, chopped

1 Cook the noodles following the pack instructions, drain and set aside for later. Heat the oil in a large frying pan and pour in the beaten egg. Swirl around the pan to make a thin omelette, cook for 1-2 mins, then flip over and cook the other side for 1 min. Tip out and slice into thin strips.

2 Add the chilli and ginger to the pan, fry for 1-2 mins then tip in the noodles, prawns and egg. Splash in the soy sauce and stir-fry for 1 min more. Throw in the chopped herbs and pour over the lime juice and zest, then sprinkle over the chopped peanuts and serve.

PER SERVING 385 kcals, protein 34g, carbs 42g, fat 11g, sat fat 2g, fibre 1g, sugar 1g, salt 2.80g >>

On the table
in 30 minutes



WHY BUY GULF PRAWNS?

Harvested from the Indian Ocean in Oman, these prawns are usually white or beige in colour and aren't in danger of going extinct. They are trawled in fishnets, by fishermen in small fibreglass boats, making it a sustainable form of fishing.



Mussels with red onion, cider & crème fraîche

SERVES 2 • PREP 10 MINS

• COOK 15 MINS  

1kg rope-grown mussels

25g unsalted butter

2 small red onions, thinly sliced

1 garlic clove, chopped

150ml dry cider

2 tsp finely chopped sage

150ml half-fat crème fraîche

1 Prepare the mussels. Scrub them to remove any barnacles and pull away the beard, then discard any that are damaged or won't close when tapped.

2 Melt the butter in a large pan and cook the onions for 3-4 mins, then add the garlic. Pour the cider over and sprinkle in the sage, then bring to the boil. Turn the heat down to a simmer and cook until reduced by half.

3 Add the mussels, cover and cook over a medium heat (shaking the pan

occasionally) for 3-4 mins until they have opened. Lift the mussels into a bowl and keep warm.

4 Bubble the cooking liquid in the pan for 2 mins, then carefully blend in the crème fraîche. Heat through and pour over the mussels to serve.

PER SERVING 364 kcals, protein 21g, carbs 14g, fat 24g, sat fat 14g, fibre 1g, sugar 7g, salt 1.19g

WHY BUY ROPE-GROWN MUSSELS?

Considered to be one of the most sustainable species of seafood, rope-grown mussels are inexpensive, environmentally friendly and packed with protein, vitamins and minerals, as well as being low in fat. According to The Shellfish Association of Great Britain, 100g of mussels (a large bowl with their shell on) provides nearly a quarter of the weekly recommended amount of omega-3. Sweet, meaty and juicy, rope-grown mussels are particularly good at this time of year, as during the summer, they spawn and lose weight. They grow quickly and require little managing as they feed on nutrients in the water. No chemicals are needed in the farming process and they are easy to harvest, with no damaging fishing methods.

HEALTH BENEFITS

The nutritional value of fish is affected by the season, the species and the cut. In winter, oily varieties, such as mackerel, and shellfish, such as mussels, are richer in fat, including valuable omega-3 and fat-soluble vitamins A and D. There are lower levels of these fats in the tail fillet of larger fish, such as salmon, so it's best to eat a chunkier cut from the main body of the fish. Regardless of the season, white fish are a richer source of iodine, essential for a healthy thyroid.

Serve with crusty bread for a special meal for two

Pan-fried white fish with polenta & orange crust

SERVES 4 ● PREP 5 MINS ● COOK

15 MINS **Easy** **Superhealthy** **Heart healthy***The fish can be coated then chilled for a few hours before you're ready to cook it.***2 tbsp plain flour****4 tbsp fine polenta****Grated zest of ½ orange****1 tbsp thyme leaves****4 x 140g sustainable white fish fillets, skinned and boned (see below, or use 2 small fillets per person)****1 egg, beaten****25g butter****2 tbsp olive oil****500g baby spinach**

1 Mix the flour, polenta, orange zest and thyme leaves together with some seasoning. Dip the fillets in the beaten egg then roll in the polenta mix to coat.

2 Heat the butter and olive oil in a large frying pan until foaming, add the fillets and lower the heat. Cook for 3 mins on each side. Meanwhile, wilt the spinach in a large pan, drain off the excess water, season and divide between 4 plates. Serve with the fish fillet on top.

PER SERVING 324 kcals, protein 33g, carbs 15g, fat 15g, sat fat 5g, fibre 3g, sugar 3g, salt 0.89g **CF**

CHOOSING WHITE FISH

At this time of the year, good white fish options are wild black sea bream and lemon sole, as both of these spawn slightly later in the spring than other white species. Responsibly farmed fish to consider include tilapia and sea bass, both available in some supermarkets. To keep up to date with sustainable fish guidelines, and what is good to eat, visit choosewisely.ae.

Quick to cook
and healthy, too



Coffee cuisine

Coffee can be so much more than morning pick-me-up – the new De'Longhi PrimaDonna S De Luxe espresso maker inspires you to get creative with coffee.



The new De'Longhi the PrimaDonna S Deluxe coffee machine packs in a whole host of snazzy features in its sleek, stylish body. This fully automatic coffee machine from the Italian brand not only makes the perfect cup of espresso each time, but is equally adept at making Cappuccino, Café Latte and Latte Macchiato or frothed milk at the touch of a button. Other features include a memory function so your preferred settings are stored in the machine, a cup warmer function, an auto clean facility and the ingenious Auto-cappuccino option which stores milk in the in-built container when not in use. The appliance is available at Jashanmal stores and select retail outlets across UAE.



TRY THESE DELICIOUS RECIPES USING THE PRIMADONNA S DELUXE



Sirloin alla brasiliana

SERVES 4 | PREP 10 MINS | COOK 20-30 MINS 🍷

1.5 kg sirloin steak, cut into 4 steaks

Butter, for cooking

Water, for cooking

1 clove of garlic

3 medium onions, finely chopped

2 tsp salt

¼ cup of flour

1 cup dry white wine

1 tsp dried oregano

½ tsp pepper

1 cup of coffee

1 Brown the sirloin with butter in a casserole dish, stirring from time to time. Add enough water to cover, then add garlic, onions and salt. Cover and cook until the onions are completely tender.

2 Remove the meat and onions from the casserole dish, leaving the sauce inside. Add the flour, wine, oregano, pepper and coffee to the sauce. Stir slowly until it thickens.

3 Put the meat and onions back into the casserole and cook over a low flame until the meat is tender. Serve with mashed potatoes and steamed vegetables on the side.

Coffee sorbet

SERVES 4 | PREP 10 MINS | COOK 2 HRS
30 MINS

250ml water

250g sugar

250ml espresso (5 long ristretto coffees)

1 egg white

Coffee beans, for garnish (optional)

1 Boil the water with the sugar, add the ristretto coffee which was prepared earlier, mix well. Leave it to cool for at least two hours in the fridge. When cooled, pour everything into a metal container.

2 Whisk the eggs to a stiff peak with the remaining sugar, and gently mix with the cooled coffee.

3 Place the egg white and coffee mix in the freezer and liquidise (or stir very well) at least three times during freezing so that it does not freeze completely.

4 Remove from the freezer 10 minutes before serving. Decorate with the coffee beans, if you like, or even with whipped cream as an option.

Kitchen notes

Nutrition advice,
cooking tips and
product picks for
your pantry.



Italy's finest produce

Eataly, the new Italian food market and restaurant at Dubai Mall, is the place to visit to satisfy your Italian food cravings. The first outlet to open in the GCC (there are 18 others around the world, across Italy, Japan, and the US), Eataly offers an enormous selection of high-quality ingredients. The aisles are stocked with everything from truffles in jars, Italian sauces, spreads, and jams, to a variety of pastas, fine Italian chocolate and biscuits, and gourmet oils. The food hall-style space also boasts 11 counters that offer fresh burrata and Italian cheeses, cold cuts, meat, freshly baked breads, authentic pastries and cakes, pizza and bowls of fresh pasta. It's true Italian foodie heaven! Call 04-3308899.



A REASON TO EAT CLEAN

According to a recent report from The Institute for Responsible Technology, genetically modified (GM) foods can be closely linked with gluten-related disorders. These foods cause intestinal permeability, imbalanced gut bacteria, trigger allergic responses, decrease proper digestion of food, and destroy the intestinal wall. The most common and widely used genetically modified food crops are soy, corn, canola oil, cotton, sugar (from sugar beets), zucchini, yellow squash, Hawaiian papaya and alfalfa. To eliminate GM food from your diet, read ingredient labels well, and avoid anything which states high fructose corn syrup (HFCS), soy lecithin, dextrose and corn starch.

Look what we found!

3 great new products for your kitchen



We will be treating ourselves to steaming cups of cocoa from Catwalk Cow's new preservative-free Hot Cocoa mix, to keep warm this winter. Dhs16 for a pack (makes 18 cups). Available at Choithram's.

Kids will love this Dinki Delicious fusilli pasta which comes in a smaller child-friendly size. Dhs8 for a 500g pack at dinkidelicious.co.uk.



This innovative Impliant oil set contains three oils or vinegars in one bottle. Choose from oils like truffle, argan and walnut oil, or vinegars such as mango balsamic. From Dhs13 per selection, at Crescendo.



Reader tip of the month

Before cooking with chicken, make sure to brine it. This prevents the chicken from becoming dry later on.

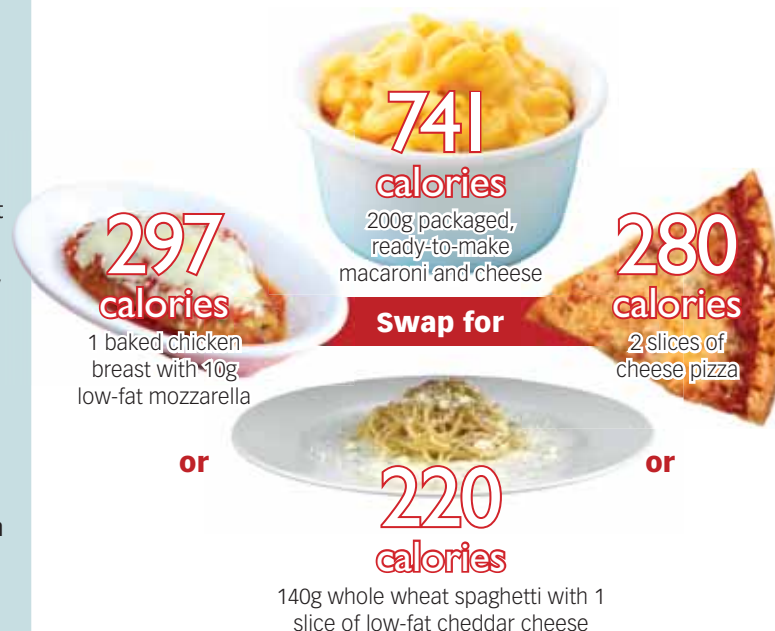
- Colm Carmody



Got a great tip you want to share?
Get in touch with us on facebook or twitter



SMART FOOD SWAPS



Health update> CANCER-PROOF YOUR DIET

January is Cervical Cancer Awareness month, so pack your diet with food that will help protect and reduce the risk of cervical cancer. Vegetables such as broccoli, cabbage, cauliflower, kale and Brussels sprouts have a natural compound Indole 3-carbinole (I3C) – which occurs when the vegetables are chopped or eaten – and this has anti-estrogenic properties that can protect against cervical cancer. Ellagic acid food such as raspberries, walnuts and pecans also help protect against cancer, as this acid destroys cancerous cells and aids the immune system. It's also important to avoid high GI foods as they stimulate the production of insulin and insulin-like growth factor – two hormones which promote tumour progression.

An Asian spread

Keep it light and fresh at your next dinner party, with this simple, fuss-free Asian menu from Joachim Textor, executive chef at Anantara Dubai The Palm Resort and Spa.

Photographs ANAS CHERUR



Joachim Textor has worked in restaurant kitchens all over the world, including Germany, Switzerland, and United Kingdom. The German chef's global journeys have also taken him across Asia, where he has worked in Manila, Beijing, Singapore and Seoul to name a few cities, during which time he developed a passion for Far Eastern cuisine. He moved to Dubai over seven years ago and worked at Al Ghurair Rotana before taking up the position of Executive Chef at the newly opened Anantara Dubai The Palm Resort and Spa.

Here, he explores his love for Asian flavours with these recipes from the hotel's signature pan-Asian restaurant, Mekong.

Chicken satay

SERVES 4 • PREP 45 MINS

• COOK 15 MINS **Easy**

You will need

1 pack of wooden skewers.

8-12 skinless chicken

thighs, cut into thin strips

FOR THE SATAY MARINADE

15g fresh or frozen lemongrass, minced

2 shallots or 1 small onion, sliced

3 cloves garlic

1-2 fresh red chillies, sliced, or ½ tsp cayenne pepper, to taste

1 thumb-size piece galangal or ginger, thinly sliced

1 tsp minced fresh turmeric or ½ tsp dried turmeric

20g ground coriander

5g cumin

50ml dark soy sauce

40ml fish sauce

20g brown sugar

30ml vegetable oil

Dipping sauce, peanut sauce

1 Soak wooden skewers in water while you prepare the meat (to prevent burning).

2 Cut chicken into thin strips and place in a bowl.

3 Blitz all marinade ingredients in a food processor until it forms a paste. Taste the mixture to make sure it is sweet and salty. Add more sugar, chilli or fish sauce (in place of salt) to adjust if needed.

4 Pour the marinade over the chicken and mix to combine. Allow at least 1 hr or more for marinating.

5 When ready to cook, thread chicken onto skewers. Fill up to ¾ of the skewer, leaving the lower bit for turning while cooking.

6 Place on a grill, and baste with leftover marinade the first time you turn it. You can also broil in the oven – set the oven to broil – and place the satay close to the heating element. Turn the meat every 5 mins until cooked.

Depending on how thin your meat is, the satay should cook in 4-7 mins. Serve with peanut sauce on the side.

Thai green papaya salad with crispy soft shell crab

SERVES 4 ● PREP 35 MINS

● COOK 10 MINS **Easy**

1 small or ½ large green papaya
50g bean sprouts
1-2 tomatoes, cut into thin wedges or long strips
3 spring onions, cut into long matchstick-like pieces
15g fresh basil, leaves left whole or chopped
1 red chilli, sliced, seeds removed
1 cup blanched green beans, optional
1 small Thai soft shell crab (Available at leading supermarkets)
1 tsp corn starch, to dust the soft shell crab
30ml peanut oil
Handful of fresh coriander
35g peanuts or cashew nuts, roasted
Handful of cherry tomatoes, halved
FOR THE DRESSING
20ml fish sauce or soy sauce
20ml vegetable oil
15-20g shrimp paste
30ml lime juice
½ or 1 tbsp of liquid honey, to taste
¼ tbsp chilli flakes or cayenne pepper, to taste

1 Mix the dressing ingredients, making sure the shrimp paste and honey dissolve completely. Add more honey or chilli to taste. Set aside.

2 Use a sharp knife to peel the green papaya, slice in half and scrape out the seeds. Grate the papaya with a large grater, or make thin, ribbon-like strips, with a potato peeler. Place the papaya in a large bowl.

3 Add tomato, spring onions, chilli and cayenne, bean sprouts, green beans, shrimp or tofu, and most of the basil. Pour the dressing over and toss well.

4 Dust the soft shell crab with corn starch and fry in peanut oil until cooked.

5 Add the nuts to the salad and toss again. Add a little more fish sauce or soy sauce if you like. If too sweet or salty, add more lime juice.

6 Serve the salad in bowls or plates with the crab on the side. Top with basil, coriander, cherry tomatoes and nuts.>>

CHEF'S TIP An unripe papaya should be firm on the outside with greenish-orange skin, and should have white to light orange flesh on the inside.





Stir-fried rice noodles with shrimps and sea scallops

SERVES 4 • PREP 15 MINS

• COOK 10 MINS **Easy** **V**

450 dried Thai rice noodles (linguini width)

8 kaffir lime leaves

20ml oil, such as peanut, canola, or sunflower

10ml sesame oil

1 tsp minced garlic

10ml ABC sauce (Available at select Asian stores)

20-30ml fish sauce

2 tsp lime juice

3g sugar

1 pinch cayenne pepper, optional

240g raw shrimp, shells removed (tails can be left on)

80g scallops

30ml chicken stock

60g bean sprouts

15g dry roasted peanuts, ground or chopped fine

Handful of fresh basil or sliced spring onions

1 Bring a large pot of water to a near boil. Remove from heat and add the rice noodles, pressing down into the warm water. When softening, but firm and chewy (firmer than al dente), drain and rinse it with cold water.

2 Blend 6 lime leaves, oil, garlic, sauces, lime juice, sugar and cayenne pepper. Blitz to make a thin sauce (the lime leaves should be reduced to very small pieces).

3 Place a wok or frying pan over medium-high heat. Add 20ml of the blended sauce and shrimps and scallops. Stir-fry for 1-2 mins, adding the chicken stock when your wok or pan becomes dry. The shrimps and scallops should be plump when cooked.

4 Add the noodles and the remaining sauce. Then add the 2 kaffir lime leaves and bean sprouts. Using 2 wooden spoons or spatulas, toss the noodles in the pan until the sauce is well distributed. Add 1 tbsp fish sauce (if not salty enough), and a pinch of cayenne pepper to make it spicier.

5 Add the noodles to a plate and top with ground peanuts, fresh basil or spring onions.



Bananas and lychees with sweet coconut milk

SERVES 4 • PREP 10 MINS

• COOK 5 MINS **Easy** **V**

1 large or 2 small ripe bananas

8-10 fresh or tinned lychees, peeled

1 can coconut milk

10-15g brown sugar, depending on desired sweetness

5g tamarind paste or palm sugar

Pinch of salt

Black sesame seeds, for garnish

Orchid flower, for garnish (optional)

Fried banana, for serving (optional)

1 Peel the bananas and slice in half lengthways, and then into smaller sections – roughly 1.5 cm long.

2 Pour the coconut milk into a saucepan and place over medium-high heat. Add 10g sugar at a time, stirring to dissolve – about 30 secs to 1 min.

3 Add the rest of the ingredients and stir until the bananas and lychees are warmed through – 1-2 mins.

4 Place in a bowl, sprinkle sesame seeds on top and serve with the orchid flower and fried banana on the side. Serve immediately. The dessert is excellent served hot or cold. **GF**

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Learn to: Make Vietnamese spring rolls

Barney Desmazery shows you how to create these fresh-tasting rice paper rolls – they make a great snack, starter or light main course. Photographs PETER CASSIDY

**Chef
skills**

Vietnamese prawn spring rolls

MAKES 12 • PREP 30 MINS • NO COOK

Easy  **Low fat**

The key is to get everything ready and close to hand before you start rolling. All the ingredients are available from larger supermarkets or an Asian grocery store.

FOR THE DIPPING SAUCE

2 garlic cloves, finely chopped
1 small red chilli (deseeded if you don't like it too hot), finely chopped
1 tbsp finely chopped ginger
1 tbsp golden caster sugar
3 tbsp fish sauce
juice of 1 lime

FOR THE ROLLS

100g rice vermicelli or bean thread noodles
12 x 20cm round rice paper wrappers (see tip, below)
Handful of mint leaves
18 cooked prawns, cut in half lengthways
2-3 large iceberg lettuce leaves, torn into 12 pieces
1 carrot, cut into thin batons
75g cucumber, cut into thin batons
A handful each of coriander, Thai basil and long chives
50g beansprouts

PER ROLL 74 kcals, protein 5g, carbs 12g, fat none, sat fat none, fibre 1g, sugar 3g, salt 1.1g

TIP Round rice paper pancakes – also called rice paper wrappers – come in various sizes. The larger 20cm pancakes (try Chinese and Thai food shops) are ideal, as they give you lots of excess pancake to help with the rolling technique. If you can only find 10cm pancakes, you'll need to make your rolls a bit smaller and thinner, and wrapping them will be slightly more fiddly.



FILLINGS Vary your fillings to suit individual tastes. Strips of red pepper and shredded lengths of spring onion can be added to the vegetable mix. Shredded Chinese roast duck or thinly sliced, seared rare beef would work well instead of the prawns. Or make vegan rolls by leaving out the prawns and serving with an appropriate dipping sauce.

EXTRAS Add more chilli to this sauce if you like it really fiery. You could also add crushed peanuts to the rolls to give them more texture.

Who doesn't love spring rolls? Here's a lighter, healthier Vietnamese version. There's no actual cooking involved, but they can be fiddly to assemble – getting the rolling technique just right is a skill in itself. Once made, the rolls and the dipping sauce will keep in the fridge for a few hours, so there will be no last-minute prep. 9

- Barney Desmazery



1 Make the dipping sauce by pounding the garlic, chilli, ginger and sugar together using a pestle and mortar, then stir in the fish sauce and lime juice. Alternatively, just blitz everything together in a mini blender.



2 Soak the rice noodles in a bowl of hot water for 15 mins, then drain well. Assemble all the prepared filling ingredients – once you start, you will need everything to hand.



3 When you are ready to make the rolls, dip one of the rice papers in a bowl of hot water, moving it around until the whole wrapper is soft – about 10-15 secs – then drain on a tea towel.



4 Place a rice paper wrapper on a board and at one edge of the wrapper, add a few mint leaves, then three prawn halves.



5 Place some lettuce on top of the prawns, followed by some noodles, a few strips of carrot and cucumber, some more herbs and finally some beansprouts. Don't overfill the pancakes or they will be hard to roll.



6 Lift the edge of the rice paper wrapper nearest to you over the filling and, holding the filling in position with your fingers, start rolling up tightly.



7 When you're about halfway, fold the ends of the rice paper in and over the filling so that it is completely enclosed.



8 Keep on rolling tightly until the whole rice paper wrapper is rolled up. To serve, cut the rolls in half on the diagonal. [GF](#)

Make it LIGHTER

Your favourite desserts get a healthy makeover in the hands of food writer Angela Nilsen.



Moist and sticky
– but very little
saturated fat

Food styling: ANGELA NILSEN | Styling: VICTORIA ALLEN | Photographs: DAVID MUNN

Lighter lemon drizzle cake

CUTS INTO 12 SLICES ● PREP 25 MINS

● COOK 40 MINS **Easy** ❄️**75ml rapeseed oil, plus extra for the tin**
175g self-raising flour**1½ tsp baking powder****50g ground almonds****50g polenta****Finely grated zest of 2 lemons****140g golden caster sugar****2 large eggs****225g natural yoghurt****FOR THE LEMON SYRUP****85g caster sugar****Juice of 2 lemons (about 5 tbsp)**

1 Heat oven to 180C/160C fan. Lightly oil a 20cm round x 5cm deep cake tin and line the base with baking parchment. For the cake, put the flour, baking powder, ground almonds and polenta in a large mixing bowl. Stir in the lemon zest and sugar, then make a dip in the centre. Beat the eggs in a bowl, then stir in the yogurt. Tip this mixture along with the oil into the dip (A), then briefly and gently stir with a large metal spoon so everything is just combined, without overmixing.

2 Spoon the mixture into the tin and level the top (B). Bake for 40 mins or until a skewer inserted into the centre of the cake comes out clean. Cover loosely with foil for the final 5-10 mins if it starts to brown too quickly.

3 While the cake cooks, make the lemon syrup. Tip the caster sugar into a small saucepan with the lemon juice and 75ml water. Heat over a medium heat, stirring occasionally, until the sugar has dissolved. Raise the heat, boil for 4 mins until slightly reduced and syrupy, then remove from the heat.

4 Remove the cake from the oven and let it cool briefly in the tin. While it is still warm, turn it out of the tin, peel off the lining paper and sit the cake on a wire rack set over a baking tray or similar. Use a skewer to make lots of small holes all over the top of the cake (C). Slowly spoon over half the lemon syrup (D) and let it soak in. Spoon over the rest in the same way, brushing the edges and sides of the cake too with the last of the syrup.

PER SLICE 243 kcals, protein 4.7g, carbs 35.4g, fat 10.2g, sat fat 1.4g, fibre 0.9g, sugar 21.5g, salt 0.34g

How to make it healthier

- I eliminated butter completely and replaced it with a combination of yoghurt and rapeseed oil.
- I mixed in ground almonds to lighten and moisten, and bulked out with polenta, which intensified the texture and colour.
- As I used the yoghurt and oil mix, I needed fewer eggs.
- I reduced the sugar.

TOPPING TIP

This recipe gives a smooth, syrupy lemon topping that soaks into the cake. If you like a crunchy topping, use 1 tbsp less caster sugar for the lemon syrup, then – after it has been spooned over the cake – sprinkle over 1 tbsp granulated sugar.

THE RESULT

Per slice	Classic lemon drizzle	Healthier lemon drizzle
kcals	335	243
fat	17.9g	10.2g
sat fat	10.4g	1.4g
total sugars	27.6g	21.5g

WHAT IF I USED...

- **100g ground almonds instead of 50g ground almonds and 50g polenta?**

The fat would increase to 12.2g (1.4g sat fat) per slice.

- **225g Greek yoghurt?**

The fat would increase to 11.1g (2.0g sat fat) per slice.

- **225g 2% Greek yoghurt?**

The fat would decrease to 9.8g (1.1g sat fat) per slice.

- **1 tbsp half-fat crème fraîche to serve with each slice?**

The fat would increase to 12.2g (2.7g sat fat) per slice.

OTHER WAYS TO USE...

The cake mixture Try it as an orange or lime drizzle cake by changing the citrus zest and juice. Cut leftover cake into cubes as a fruity, moist base for a trifle. Or serve slices topped with fresh raspberries or blueberries and a spoonful of half-fat crème fraîche. >>





Soft, almondy
filling with less than
half the total fat

Lighter Bakewell tart

CUTS INTO 8 SLICES • PREP 25 MINS

• COOK 50 MINS **Easy**

200g shop-bought shortcrust pastry
flour, for dusting

100g fresh raspberries

1 tbsp raspberry conserve or jam

1 tbsp flaked almonds

1 heaped tbsp icing sugar

FOR THE FILLING

50g ground almonds

50g polenta (cornmeal)

50g golden caster sugar, plus 2 tsp

½ tsp baking powder

2 medium eggs

100g natural yogurt

½ tsp almond extract

(see Tip, right)

2 tbsp rapeseed oil

1 Heat oven to 200C/180C fan. Thinly roll out the pastry on a lightly floured surface. Line a 20cm round x 4cm deep fluted flan tin with the pastry, easing it into the tin and the flutes carefully so you don't stretch it. Roll a rolling pin over the top of the tin to trim off any excess pastry. Prick the base lightly with a fork. Put the tin on a baking sheet.

2 Line the pastry with foil and baking beans, and bake for 12 mins until the pastry is set. Meanwhile, to make the filling, heat a small, dry non-stick pan, tip in the ground almonds and gently heat, stirring often, for 2-3 mins to lightly brown. Transfer to a medium-sized mixing bowl to cool. Remove the foil and beans from the pastry case and bake for 5 mins more until pale golden. Remove and reduce oven to 180C/160C fan.

3 Using a fork, roughly mash the raspberries in a small bowl with the jam, so they are still in small pieces and not completely mashed. Evenly spread the raspberry mixture over the pastry base. Put the polenta, sugar and baking powder in the mixing bowl with the almonds and stir to combine. Make a well in the centre. Beat the eggs in a bowl, then beat in the yogurt and almond extract. Tip this mixture, along with the oil, into the dry ingredients, and briefly and gently stir together with a large metal spoon so everything is just combined – don't overmix.

4 Pour the almond filling over the raspberry mixture and scatter the flaked almonds over the top. Bake for 30 mins or until the top is risen and pale golden. Cool slightly, then remove from the tin. **5** Mix the icing sugar with a few drops of cold water to make a thick-ish icing, then use a teaspoon to drizzle it over the cooled tart. The tart is even softer when eaten the next day. *Will keep in an airtight container for up to 3 days.*

PER SLICE 280 kcals, protein 5.9g, carbs 27.2g, fat 16.2g, sat fat 3.9g, fibre 1.1g, sugar 12.8g, salt 0.4g

TIP It's worth using almond extract, as it has a genuine almond flavour, whereas almond essence is a cheaper version and quite unlike the real thing.

THE RESULT

Per serving	Classic Bakewell tart	Healthier version
kcals	429	280
fat	28.2g	16.2g
sat fat	12.5g	3.9g
fibre	0.9g	1.1g
sugar	20.3g	12.8g

How to make the tart healthier

- To reduce the saturated fat, I used shop-bought pastry made with vegetable oil, which was pliable and easier to roll out thinly, so used less.
- I reduced the total fat further by using polenta to replace some of the ground almonds, then enhanced the flavour with almond extract.
- I swapped butter for yoghurt and rapeseed oil, which reduced more fat, especially saturated fat. I also used less egg, choosing medium instead of large.

- I cut the sugar by reducing it in the filling and icing, and substituting some of the jam for fresh fruit.

WHAT IF I USED...

200g homemade pastry made with butter?

The fat remains virtually the same as my healthy version, but the saturated fat rises to 5.7g per slice.

85g butter in the filling instead of yoghurt and rapeseed oil? The fat would increase to 21.8g (9g sat fat) per slice.

Lighter Victoria sandwich

CUTS INTO 8 SLICES • PREP 25 MINS

• COOK 20 MINS **Easy** **GF** UNFILLED**2 tbsp rapeseed oil, plus extra for the tin****175g self-raising flour****1½ tsp baking powder****140g golden caster sugar****25g ground almonds****2 large eggs****175g natural yoghurt****2-3 drops vanilla extract****25g butter, melted****4 tbsp raspberry conserve****½ tsp icing sugar, to decorate**

1 Heat oven to 180C/160C fan. Lightly oil 2 x 18cm sandwich cake tins (preferably loose-bottomed) and line the bases with baking parchment. Tip the flour, baking powder, caster sugar and ground almonds into a large mixing bowl, then make a well in the centre. Beat the eggs in a bowl, then stir in the yoghurt and vanilla. Pour this mixture, along with the melted butter and oil, into the dry mixture (A) and stir briefly together with a large metal spoon until well combined.

2 Divide the mixture evenly between the 2 tins (B) and level the tops. Bake both cakes, side by side, for 20 mins until risen and beginning to come away slightly from the edges of the tins.

3 Remove the cakes from the oven and loosen the sides with a round-bladed knife. Let the cakes cool briefly in the tins, then turn them out. If the tins are loose-bottomed, an easy way is to sit the tin on an upturned jam jar and let the outer ring of the tin drop down (C). Peel off the lining paper and sit the cakes on a wire rack. Leave until completely cold.

4 Put one of the cakes on a serving plate and spread over the conserve (D). Put the other cake on top and sift over the icing sugar, or make a pattern (see below).

PER SLICE 263 kcals, protein 5.6g, carbs 39g, fat 9.3g, sat fat 2.8g, fibre 1.3g, sugar 24.1g, salt 0.6g

**How to make it healthier**

- I reduced the eggs to lower the fat.
- By greatly reducing the butter and using yoghurt and rapeseed oil as substitutes, fat was lowered, especially saturated fat.
- I cut down on the amount of sugar.

WHAT IF I USED...

- **175g Greek yoghurt?**

The fat would increase to 10.8g (3.9g sat fat) per slice.

- **150ml whipped double cream to fill the cake, along with the conserve?**

The fat would increase to 19.3g (9.1g sat fat) per slice.

OTHER WAYS TO USE...

The cake mixture Make it citrusy by stirring the finely grated zest of 1 orange or lemon into the cake mix. Or, spoon the mix into paper cases to make cupcakes or fairy cakes.

MAKE IT DECORATIVE...

Instead of just dusting the top with icing sugar, create a pattern of your choice by making a paper template. Lay the template on the cake, dust with icing sugar, then carefully lift off the template to reveal the design. **GF**

**THE RESULT**

Per slice	Classic Victoria sandwich	Healthier version
kcals	371	263
fat	20.3g	9.3g
sat fat	12g	2.8g
sugar	27.4g	24.1g



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IN THIS SECTION

- * Wise up on weight loss, **P60** * Smart ways to give your diet a healthy makeover, **P65**
- * An exclusive chat with French chef extraordinaire, Guy Savoy, **P68** * Ireland is green in more ways than one, **P74**



15 golden rules for losing weight

Spending hours at the gym trying to get ride of the festive bulge? Here are some expert guidelines to help you lose weight effectively as you kick-start your 2014 fitness regime. By Nicola Monteath.

A healthy, balanced diet combined with an exercise regime are probably one of your top resolutions this year. But if you are eating the wrong food, or even the right food at the wrong time, your weight loss goal could easily go astray. We got the experts to share their top rules for weight loss, to make sure you maximise the benefits from hours spent exercising.

1 GO GAGA FOR GRAPEFRUIT
Dora Ferko, body toning and pilates instructor at Real Pilates, recommends eating grapefruit before meals as the enzymes in the fruit help lower insulin levels, which in turn regulate metabolism. When your metabolism is well regulated, it helps you lose weight quicker.

SAY YES TO SUPERFOODS

"Consuming superfoods make you feel fuller for longer and can result in a decrease in body fat by influencing your calorie burn," says Haitham Khalid, combination trainer at Fitness with Food, a Doha-based lifestyle training centre. Some of the most nutritious superfoods are chia seeds, acai berries, spirulina, wheatgrass, hemp seeds and cocoa nibs. The maca root is also a great superfood, as it increases stamina and energy levels.

TRY AGE-OLD REMEDIES

Rochelle Lubbe, executive director and founder of Amigo's sports and event consultants says the oldest, most effective method to weight management is to mix 1 teaspoon of natural raw honey with 2 tablespoons of lemon juice or 2-3 slices of lemon in a cup of hot water. Drink this every morning on an empty stomach to get rid of toxins which make the body sluggish and ineffective in fat-burning.

4 CRAVE FOR QUINOA
"Quinoa, the all-star grain belongs in every weight loss plan, as just one cup of quinoa contains eight grams of protein, five grams of fibre and iron, zinc, selenium and Vitamin E," says Shaveer Haripershad, personal trainer and coach. The low GI grain is great for those watching their weight, as it keeps you feeling full for longer and releases energy slowly.

COOK WITH COCONUT OIL

Extra virgin coconut oil increases metabolism and balances your sugar levels at the same time. The saturated fats in this oil are known as medium-chain triglycerides (MCTs) and are used as energy, instead of being stored as fat in the body.



DRINK GREEN AND WHITE TEA

The antioxidant and vitamin rich green tea helps promote weight loss by stimulating the body to burn abdominal fat. It contains a chemical known as epigallocatechin gallate (EGCG), which helps burn calories quicker. A few cups of white tea per day is also good for you as it is packed with nutrients. "It lowers blood pressure and bad cholesterol levels, increases good cholesterol levels and speeds up your metabolism levels at the same time," says Rochelle. The higher your metabolic rate, the more energy you gain – this is effective when exercising.

MIND YOUR EATING HABITS

Veronique Droulez, Global Nutrition Research Manager at Meat and Livestock Australia recommends eating food slowly and with pleasure. "Only eat when you're hungry, not because you're stressed or bored. If you go off plan, just accept it and get back on it," she says.

CHOOSE OILY FISH

Salmon, herring and mackerel are all low in fat, packed with proteins and high in Omega-3 fatty acids. They also contain healthy fish oil which increase the elasticity of blood vessel walls and improve the flow of blood to muscles while exercising. Salmon also contains healthy oils which decrease leptin levels – a hormone which slows down the metabolism rate and increases weight – making it a great choice for those looking to burn fat.

9 SNACK WISELY

"Heart-healthy pine nuts contain pinolenic acid, which sends messages to your hormones, indicating you are full," says Rochelle. A serving of pine nuts helps suppress your appetite and has iron and protein – both of which are beneficial for weight loss. Almonds, as Dora suggests, are also a good choice as they are rich in manganese, copper, magnesium, and B vitamins such as riboflavin, niacin and biotin which give you energy and allow you to exercise for longer. Edamame is another snack ideal for those who crave salty, savoury food, as the beans inside are packed with protein and essential fatty acids which help lower LDL and cholesterol levels, while protecting your heart as you shed the pounds.

10 ALWAYS CHOOSE LEAN, PROTEIN-RICH FOOD

"The body finds it easier to burn calories which digest protein, as opposed to those which digest fat and carbohydrates," says Kiram El Tbayli, head of the slimming department at VLCC. A diet high in protein causes substances called ketones to be released into your bloodstream. These substances lower your appetite and keep you full for longer. Always choose lean protein food such as lean beef, turkey, fish, chicken, tofu and eggs, as opposed to protein which has a high fat content. Veronique recommends protein-rich food such as lean meat (beef and lamb) four times a week, which can help you burn calories quicker as it is low in fat.

HAVE A BOOSTER SHOT

Coffee drinkers probably already experience increased energy levels after a morning cup of coffee. Kiram suggests enjoying black coffee in moderation to help increase the metabolic rate while exercising. Anna Pettit, nutrition consultant for TribeFit, a fitness studio, recommends a small cup of black coffee or an espresso, pre-workout, if energy levels are low. >>

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CONSUME CARBS BEFORE YOU WORK OUT

A glass of water is sufficient before a jog or a light walk. But if you're doing more intense exercises, eat easy-

to-digest carbohydrates such as toast or half a plain bagel or banana, to provide fuel, says Anna. "Avoid pre-workout protein bars and shakes, as some of them pack high amounts of protein but omit sufficient carbohydrates – which depletes energy levels. Like fat, protein doesn't hit the bloodstream quickly, so you can feel lethargic even though you have eaten," Anna adds.



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SPICE IT UP

"Spicy foods contain chemical compounds that can kick metabolism into a higher gear," says Kiram. Anna suggests adding chillies to dishes, as it has a compound called capsaicin which has a thermogenic effect – causes the body to burn extra calories for 20 minutes after eating the chillis.

INCLUDE HEALTHY FATS IN YOUR DIET

"Monounsaturated fatty acids are used as slow burning energy in the body. This energy and the feeling of satiety that you get from eating fruits like avocado, which are packed with fibre and protein, is one of the reasons why healthy fats are good," says nutritionist Hala Barghout. Stick to quarter or half of an avocado a day – it has a high calorie count – but do keep in mind the other calories and fat content eaten as well, to balance out your total calorie intake. Peanut butter is also a great source of monounsaturated fats, and is a healthy alternative to regular butter. Choose low or reduced-fat options of peanut butter and enjoy it on wholegrain toast or with a celery stick as a snack.

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DO A DETOX

15

TRIED & TESTED

DETOX DELIGHT 5-DAY PACKAGE

Months of eating carelessly, and practically being chained to my desk meant that I had put on far more weight than I could shake off with just a few diet tweaks – drastic measures were called for. The Detox Delight package put me on a juice and soup only diet (with a couple of solid meals included) with the promise of helping me cleanse my body,



lose weight and clear up my skin in less than a week. I'm usually skeptical about serious results being achieved from things like this, but was pleasantly surprised.

The daily diet is made up of four juices and one soup (the soup comes in a reheat-able glass jar), which are packed with nutrient-dense and detoxifying ingredients such as apple, lemon, wheatgrass, cucumber, beetroot, spinach, lentils and so on. I was most surprised by the fact that I rarely felt hungry, in spite of being on a completely liquid diet – this is probably because the body is receiving more than enough nutrition through these drinks. Some snacks are allowed, such as sliced apple, cucumber and carrot sticks, avocado and nuts, but I hardly needed to resort to those – bar for munching on a few nuts most afternoons. In fact, on one day, I couldn't even finish my whole quota of juices – albeit it was probably because I was on the go all day – and it didn't seem to have a negative effect. I had been warned about possible side effects including headaches and nausea, which I didn't experience, but I found myself going to the bathroom more often (a sign that the detox is working) and also felt cramps in my legs from about the third day onwards – I was told this was a sign of toxins being freed from the body and it could be eased with an Epsom salt bath or massage.

The results were almost instantaneous, and I started feeling less bloated in the first two days. By the fifth day, I was visibly slimmer and my clothes were fitting less snugly, my skin felt clearer, and overall, I looked and felt lighter than I had in a long time. My biggest surprise was in the fact that I managed to get through the entire working week without my mandatory caffeine fix – I was able to get my day started with just herbal tea, and a bottle of juice seemed to happily replace my afternoon coffee. And I could maintain business as usual in terms of my work life – whether it was getting in and out of meetings, or hosting Food Club events.

While this is certainly not a lifestyle that can be adopted on a permanent basis, it is a convenient and very effective way to kick-start a healthier eating regime, and get back in shape fast. After gently cleansing your body, you can resume normal life, but it is more likely than not that you will be a bit more conscious and careful of what you're eating.

Need to know: Detox Delight diets are home-delivered in beautiful packaging every two days, along with detailed detox information and literature. Packages can be tailored according to individual needs. Prices start from Dh\$1,120, five-day package costs Dh\$1,790. Visit www.detox-delight.ae.

- Sudeshna Ghosh

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33 ways to a healthier you

Making small, practical changes to your cooking, shopping and eating habits can make a huge difference to your health. Nutritional therapist Kerry Torrens shows you how.



In my clinic I see a lot of clients – mostly women – who want to change and improve their eating habits. They might want to deal with a specific health problem, lose weight, or help their partner to do so. Like many of us, they start the new year with good intentions.

The problem is that if their goals are too ambitious, they simply can't stick to the new regime – or their family won't. Then they feel disheartened and tend to fall back into old habits.

My advice is to make sure that any changes to your diet are achievable, positive and practical. I talk to women about their family commitments, working life and stress levels, and together we come up with small steps that will make a difference, and that they can stick to. Also, I approve of *BBC Good Food Middle East's* health mission to help you cook and eat well, and to enjoy satisfying home-cooked food rather than denying yourself, or dieting. Saying that, there are times when we all need a little encouragement. Here are some small, simple changes that can make a big difference.

5 handy tips for perfect portions

Measuring everything isn't very practical, so use your own hands as a guide to getting the correct healthy serving size for you

SAVOURIES
popcorn/crisps
= 2 of your cupped hands

CARBS
cereal/rice
/pasta/potato
= your clenched fist

BAKES
brownies
/flapjacks
= 2 of your fingers

PROTEINS
meat/poultry/fish
= the palm of your hand

BUTTER and SPREADS
= the tip of your thumb

Go for grilling

Grilling or griddling is a good way to cut down on fat because you can brush the food with oil and drip off any excess, rather than add the oil directly to a pan, where you're likely to add more.

Grilled pork with apple & sage

SERVES 4 • PREP 10 MINS

• COOK 10 MINS Easy Low cal Low fat

1 of 5-a-day Good for you P

1 lemon, halved

4 x 140g pieces pork tenderloin, can be swapped with beef

2 tbsp sage leaves, roughly chopped

3 eating apples, peeled, cored and chopped

1 rounded tsp light muscovado sugar

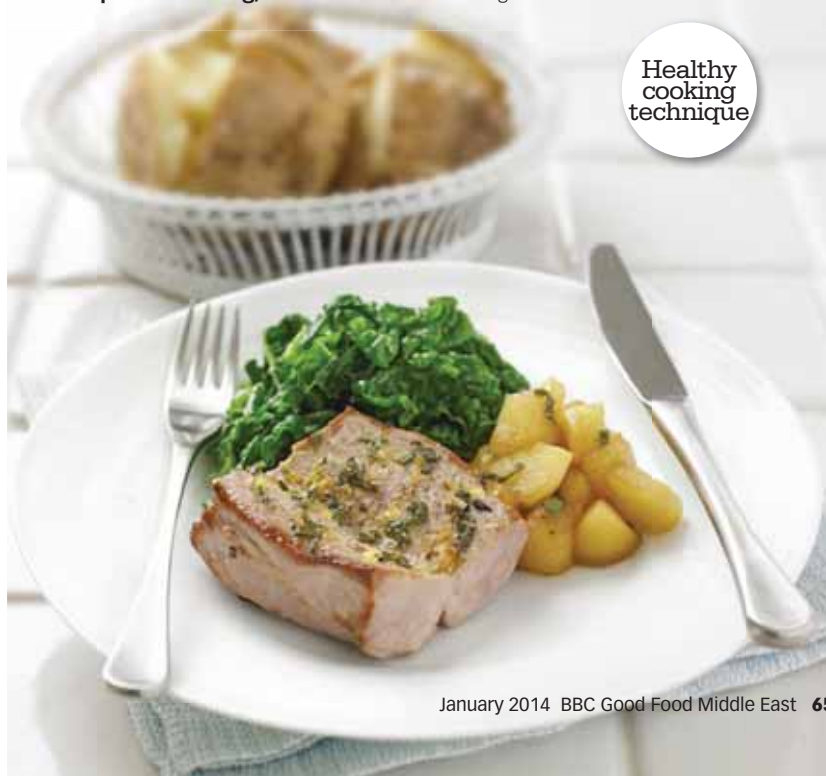
Jacket potato and veg, to serve

1 Heat grill to high. Grate the zest from half the lemon and squeeze the juice from both halves. Split the pork pieces down the centre, cutting almost all the way through, and open out like a book. Lift onto a baking tray and season with salt, pepper and the lemon zest. Sprinkle with 1 tbsp of the sage. Grill for 8-10 mins, turning once, until cooked through.

2 Meanwhile, pour the lemon juice into a small pan. Add the apples with the remaining sage, the sugar and some seasoning. Bring to the boil, stirring, then simmer until soft, about 6 mins. Serve alongside the pork with a jacket potato and some green veg.

PER SERVING 253 kcals, protein 31g, carbs 15g, fat 7g, sat fat 3g, fibre 2g, sugar 15g, salt 0.2g

Healthy
cooking
technique



5 simple shortcuts

1 Boost your breakfast cereal or smoothie

by adding bran for extra fibre and its cholesterol-lowering properties.

2 Ready in minutes Up the fibre in everyday meals with grains, pulses and beans. The Food Doctor's selection of Easy Grains includes organic quinoa, organic spelt, organic cereals, pulses and beans.

3 Haven't hit your 5-a-day? Pile ready-to-eat cooked veg from the supermarket onto couscous, add to a lunchtime sandwich, pop on a pizza or stir into pasta.

4 Fresh from the freezer Frozen sauces, with no added preservatives, are a lifesaver when it comes to quick cooking. Simply add meat, fish and vegetables for a well-balanced meal.

5 Top up your vitamin D With the indoors-y lifestyle in this region, we could all do with more vitamin D. Sundried mushrooms (available in healthfood shops) add a wonderful depth of flavour to stews and casseroles. The action of sunlight during drying helps to produce vitamin D.

Snack solution

Avoid the temptation of a family-sized bag by decanting nibbles into mini plastic storage boxes. Keep them to hand at home, in your bag or on your desk.

Healthy cooking technique

Rediscover poaching

Poaching – cooking ingredients gently in liquid – not only means you avoid adding any fat, it also keeps the food moist and tender. Try it with eggs, fruit like apples and pears, chicken breasts and salmon fillets.

Miso brown rice & chicken salad

SERVES 2 EASILY DOUBLED

● PREP 15 MINS ● COOK 30 MINS

Easy Low cal Low fat
Folate Vit C Good for you

120g brown basmati rice
2 boneless, skinless chicken breasts
140g thin-stemmed broccoli
2 tsp miso paste (we used white)
1 tbsp rice vinegar
1 tbsp mirin
1 tsp grated ginger
4 spring onions, sliced diagonally
1 tbsp sesame seeds, toasted

1 Cook the rice following pack instructions, then drain and keep

warm. While it's cooking, lower the chicken breasts into a pan of boiling water so they are completely covered. Boil for 1 min, then turn off the heat, put a lid on and let sit for 15 mins. When cooked through, cut into slices.

2 Boil the broccoli until tender. Drain, rinse under cold water and drain again. To make a dressing, mix the miso, rice vinegar, mirin and ginger together.

3 Divide the rice between 2 plates and scatter over the spring onions and sesame seeds. Place the broccoli and chicken slices on top. To finish, drizzle over the dressing.

Per serving 419 kcal, protein 39g, carbs 53g, fat 7g, sat fat 1g, fibre 5g, sugar 4g, salt 0.76g

7 snacks to keep you on track

Missed breakfast?

Avoid the temptation of a muffin and opt for an egg sandwich on granary bread. It's a good source of protein and fibre, and will keep you satisfied until lunch.

Out shopping?

Be prepared! Pop a ziplock bag of mixed nuts or seeds in your bag before you set off.

Fix that cheese craving

Opt for Edam over cheddar, as it's lower in calories and fat. Try it grilled with slices of apple or serve with celery to help manage serving size.

Afternoon energiser

Feeling sluggish? To perk yourself up, try having a couple of slices of pineapple topped with cottage cheese and a sprinkle of nuts.

When you've just left the gym

Try a banana and low-fat yoghurt. This carb and protein combo is a perfect post-exercise snack, helping to enhance muscle recovery and boost glycogen uptake.

While you're making dinner

Avoid the temptation to pick by putting a few carrot and celery sticks with a creamy guacamole or spicy salsa on your kitchen counter.

When only chocolate will do

Make it a couple of squares of 70% cocoa chocolate, rich in protective flavonoids. Or mix a handful of raisins with a handful of cacao nibs (ground cocoa beans).

4 great gluten-free buys

If you know someone with coeliac disease – which means that they can't tolerate gluten – you'll know how important it is that they follow a gluten-free diet. We've tested dozens of mixes and ready-to-eat gluten-free products, and these are our favourites. Most of them are available in large supermarkets or good healthfood shops, or visit the websites for the full range.

Start the day well For a low-fat, high-fibre breakfast, try **Doves Farm Organic Cereal Flakes**, made from rice and buckwheat. Just add a handful of nuts and a splash of milk (www.organicfoodsandcafe.com).

Yes, you can enjoy freshly baked muffins from the oven! Made from a blend of gluten-free flours, including sorghum and fava flour, this **Breads From Anna Maple Pancake & Muffin Mix** is perfect! (www.glutenfree-supermarket.ae).

Milled and baked under strict conditions Carrying the cross-grain mark, which promises they're safe for coeliacs, **Nairn's Gluten-Free Herb & Seed Oatcakes**, in handy pouches, are ideal for popping in your bag for an on-the-go snack (www.organicfoodsandcafe.com).

Helpful for home-bakers Try **Homemade Wonderful Bread Mix** – it's a blend of garbanzo-and tapioca flour with evaporated cane juice (www.glutenfree-supermarket.ae).



Low-fat
and full of
flavour

5 guilt-free treats

These 100-calorie bites won't ruin your good intentions:

- 1 Two Dark Chocolate Rice Thins (available from leading supermarkets).
- 2 Toasted crumpet with 4-5 slices of banana.
- 3 A small pot of low-fat yoghurt (125g) with a drizzle of honey.
- 4 Two rye crispbreads with low-fat cream cheese topped with slices of ripe juicy pear
- 5 A 20g serving of homemade popcorn – try our recipe, below.

Spiced chilli popcorn

SERVES 5 • PREP 5 MINS

• COOK 8 MINS **Easy**

Heat oven to 200C/180C fan. Pop **100g popcorn kernels** following pack instructions. Meanwhile, mix together **1 tsp chilli flakes**, **1 tsp cracked black pepper** and **2 tsp mixed spice**. Toss the popcorn with the spice mix, then tip onto a large baking tray and put in the oven for 5 mins until the corn is crisp and the spices are fragrant. Sprinkle with a pinch of salt and eat warm or once cooled. *Will keep in an airtight container for up to a week.*

PER SERVING (20g) 75 kJ, protein 2g, carbs 12g, fat 1g, sat fat none, fibre 2g, salt 0.1g

4 ways to wise up on labels

Learn how to spot a healthier option

LOOKING FOR LOW FAT? Products that promise fewer than 3g of fat per 100g sound great. However, they can be high in carbs, including sugar. Many also contain hydrogenated fats (vegetable oils that have hydrogen added to increase shelf life), which can raise cholesterol levels.

High-fat product ❌

Total fat: 20g per 100g

Sat fats: 5g or more per 100g

Low-fat product ✔️

Total fat: 3g or less per 100g

Sat fats: 1.5g or less per 100g

My tip If a product contains hydrogenated or partially hydrogenated vegetable oil, leave it on the shelf.

CONCERNED ABOUT SALT? Regularly eating too much salt increases blood pressure and, over time, damages the heart. Many everyday staples like bread, cereals and soups can be high in salt.

High-salt product ❌

More than 1.5g per 100g

Low-salt product ✔️

0.3g or lower per 100g

My tip Some food labels list sodium instead of salt. Work out the salt by multiplying the sodium by 2.5.

WORRIED ABOUT SUGAR? Too much sugar can lead to health problems and tooth decay. The trick is to read the nutrition panel and compare the protein with the 'carbs as sugars per 100g'. Ideally, the protein should be more than or equal to the sugars. This is particularly relevant with breakfast cereals, yoghurts, even soups.

High-sugar product ❌

More than 15g per 100g

Low-sugar product ✔️

Less than 5g per 100g

My tip Sugar comes in many guises – ingredients are listed in descending order, so the higher up the ingredients list, the more sugar is in that product.

COUNTING CALORIES? If you're tempted by 'reduced calorie' claims, don't be tricked into thinking you can eat more. They may be lower in calories but cakes, pastries and biscuits are still cakes, pastries and biscuits – and even reduced-calorie versions can pack a powerful calorie punch.

My tip Spread your 2,000-calorie intake over the day with, say, 400 for breakfast, 600 each for lunch and dinner, plus a couple of small snacks.



Making. *magic*

Guy Savoy, one of France's best known and most respected chefs, waxes eloquent on why food can be magical, in an interview with Jonathan Parsons.

As I ride the elevator to the second floor of The Pearl-Qatar's Porto-Arabia for this interview, I'm nervous. I've been invited to meet one of the world's most influential chefs. A man that changed the history of French cuisine forever – he is, after all, one of the handful who has been credited with inventing what we refer to today as 'Nouvelle cuisine'; a man whose restaurants top most guides in France, including the prestigious 'World's 50 Best' list (three times in the last ten years) and boast Michelin stars; a man who has himself won numerous awards.

Now a man of 60, and with 45 years of experience in the restaurant industry, Chef Savoy has seven restaurants spanning four continents – four in his hometown Paris, Restaurant Guy Savoy in Las Vegas, Guy Savoy in Singapore and his newest venture, *Quisine by Guy Savour* in Qatar's capital, Doha.

My nervousness was unfounded. As soon as the elevator doors opened, I found in front of me a man beaming from ear to ear with a smile that fills his whole face. Welcoming me with a "Bonjour!" he disappears to change into his chefs' whites, to "look the part for the photoshoot". I get a chance to take in my surroundings while waiting.

The artwork in his restaurant, *Quisine by Guy Savoy*, is breathtaking. As I stand gazing at an orange and blue sculpture of a giraffe's head, made entirely from matches, Chef Savoy reappears. "Incredible, isn't it?" he quips as he sits down. "Art is always important in my restaurants. In Paris I have a Buddha made from matchsticks and in Las Vegas we have a polar bear."

"I love supporting local art," he adds. "We have some beautiful pieces from an Iraqi artist

Photographs SUPPLIED

here.” He spends the next ten minutes talking about his love of art, and while I am bursting with questions, I don’t want to stop him – his passion is endearing. “To me, all of my restaurants are works of art,” he explains. “In a restaurant, everything around us is important – starting with the smile. Before the cuisine, comes the warm atmosphere. It’s impossible to have a great meal if it’s not in a nice atmosphere. When you arrive in a restaurant, you don’t see the food at first – you see the people, the walls, the artwork. Everything must be in harmony, everything must be human.”

A passion for cuisine

So, what were the motivations in this wonderfully passionate man’s youth that made him want to become a chef? “My mother used to make small cookies when I was a boy,” he says. “She used to blend flour, salt, sugar, egg and a little butter – very simple ingredients. Separately it’s impossible to eat them. But when she put them in the oven, in six or seven minutes, they become delicious, crispy cookies.”

“I think... cuisine, is magic. Every day, we transform the ingredients for every dish, every course, into something wonderful,” he sums up.

After more than 45 years in the restaurant industry, he has seen a dramatic rise in culinary standards worldwide. “The evolution of cuisine around the world is incredible,” he says. “Today my menu is totally different.”

He reminisces of the first time he visited New York City forty years ago. “There was only one place to find good produce, Dean & DeLuca, and they had a very small selection. Today you can find two hundreds types of olive oil alone in New York!” he says.

This would naturally suggest that chefs have had to raise their game over the last forty years? “Of course!” he enthusiastically shouts. “Good food today is important all over the word. Today we have TV shows about cuisine all around the world. It is good for the chefs, good for the guests.”

“And the market in Doha,” he continues. “Even here, my chef here found local fresh herbs, fresh fish. The standard of agriculture has gone up.”

The Middle East is a new market for Chef Savoy. In a region whose cuisine shares few similarities with the French, I asked him if it posed a challenge. “I arrived here to do exactly what we do in Paris, to transport it to a different world. The food and the service here is like a three Michelin star restaurant,” he says. But what about the lack of alcohol? His head droops

slightly, like a man who has had the wind taken from his sails. “It’s a problem,” he admits. “For me, wine and French food go hand in hand.” [Rumour has it the restaurant might shift to a different location soon].

Eager to bring back his enthusiasm, I ask him what other food, apart from French cuisine, he loves. He pauses for a moment, deep in thought. “Italian,” he states. Then continues, “Morrocan, Chinese, Indian...” He laughs again. “Oh, and mezze! I love mezze! Lebanese food, oh my goodness Lebanese food.” He makes a smacking sound with his lips and kisses the air. “Tabouleh! It’s so fresh, so delicious!”

Little indulgences

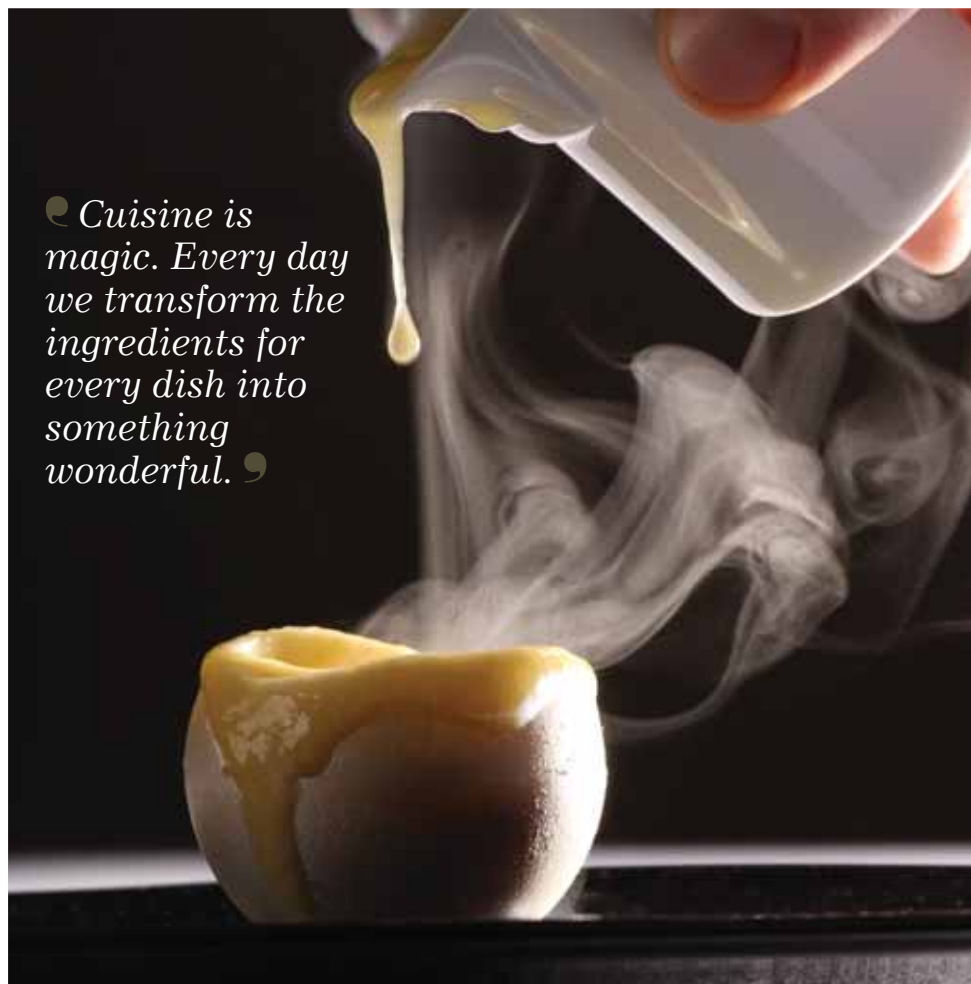
Chef Savoy smiles at me again, takes a deep breath and sinks back, deep into his dark leather armchair. I’m eager to find out about his home life – does he have dinner parties? Does he cook? “Of course! At home, if you come to the table sweating it means that you have worked hard until the last minute cooking, but you cannot do this in a restaurant!” he laughs.

What are his guilty pleasures? He looks bemused and turns to his restaurant manager for a translation. As my question is relayed to him in French, both erupt in laughter. Chef Savoy turns to me and pulls a comical face. “I love ice cream!” he says, wide eyed. “My ice cream, with low fat and just a little sugar. I take it home from the restaurant. Almond milk ice cream, strawberry, vanilla, chocolate... black chocolate sorbet, I love it! For the chocolate sorbet you need a very small spoon, but for the almond, you...,” his sentence trails off as he mimes scoffing down ice cream with a humongous spoon.

“If I am hungry, I take... this is a secret, OK?” he smiles conspiratorially. I lean in. “I take a big piece of country bread, toast it and I cut it into three or four pieces. I then go to the fridge and cut a large slice of very cold, hard butter to put on top. I then place a sardine to finish. The bread is crispy, the butter is cold and firm and the sardine is very sweet – it’s a wonderful combination.”

This quick snack, one of Guy Savoy’s guilty pleasures, sounds mouthwateringly delicious. And surprisingly simple, for a chef known for producing dishes worthy of multiple Michelin stars – a >>

• Cuisine is magic. Every day we transform the ingredients for every dish into something wonderful. •



recognition that traditionally rewards complexity.

“Michelin is like the Olympic games,” Guy says. “Once you have one, two or three stars, it’s like you’re a world champion. But, the Michelin guide does not make chefs famous; guests make the restaurant famous. We don’t make our food for the Michelin guide; we make it for the guests. If we rise to the challenge of making great cuisine then the Michelin guide arrives after.”

“I waited 17 years for my third star,” he adds. “When I got my first, I started to think about my second and after that, I think about my third. But that doesn’t change anything, the job stays the same.”

And what does he think of chefs that put their name to so many restaurants around the world that they can’t possibly control them all? “Look, it’s not my place,” he replies. “For many years I wanted just to stay in Paris. I had the opportunity to go to Las Vegas, and the first time I was asked, I said no. I didn’t want Vegas, Vegas wanted me. For me, when the project is amazing, I will say yes.”

He follows a similar ethos even when coming up with new dishes. “For me, when it is ready in my head, we try it. Maybe it will be a few minutes, a few weeks or a few months,” he says. “Cuisine is not a laboratory, it is life. For two months now, I have been thinking of a recipe around beef tail. I want to come up with a very modern recipe with that. I love that challenge – on the cow, there is only one tail! There is a large fillet, so it is easy to use, but the tail – it is special.”

This passion for his craft and ability to stay grounded has led to accolades coming thick and fast for Guy. The Michelin guide writes that ‘his cuisine reveals simplicity and sophistication, childhood memories and invention, and it is unapologetically tasty and rigorously executed’. World famous chef Gordon Ramsay credits him as being one of his biggest professional influences. Guy smiles fondly, “Oh Gordon! He was a very good student of mine in Paris. The transference of skills from chef to chef, it is very important.”

So what’s next for Guy Savoy? “Smiling,” he replies. “Loving the life. I have six grandchildren and I want to be with them.” And what about retirement? “Never,” he laughs. “The retirement age in France is 60, so I could retire already, but why would I want to? I am never tired! I sleep four or five hours per night. I’m in the restaurant before nine every morning, except if it’s a Sunday and I’m there till 1am everyday.”

There’s something very captivating about his overflowing passion, honesty and child-like enjoyment of life. Maybe that is what is key to his enduring success.



TIP You can use 1l ready fish stock and thick 150g sea bass fillets per serving to make this recipe, but it is advisable to use the whole large fish to get the right taste and texture.

SIGNATURE RECIPE

Bar en ecailles grilles, jus aux épices douces (Grilled sea bass with delicate spices)

SERVES 8-10

- 1 whole sea bass (3.5 to 4kg, with scales), cleaned**
- 1kg Swiss chard with leaves**
- 1 vanilla pod, split in half**
- Juice of 4 lemons**
- 2 tbsp flour**
- 500g horns of plenty or shiitake mushrooms**
- Olive oil, for cooking**
- 10g of spice mixture (Szechuan pepper, Jamaican pepper, yellow mustard, black mustard, black pepper, white pepper)**
- 250g butter**
- 1g dried ground ginger powder**
- ½ bunch of flat-leaf parsley, finely chopped**

- 1** Fillet, bone and trim the sea bass into steaks of 160g each, keeping the scales.
- 2** Make a fish stock by cooking the head and bones of the fish in water. Once it reaches a broth consistency, add the vanilla pod and cook for a further 30 mins.
- 3** Cut the Swiss chard to separate the stem from the leaves. Peel the stem, cut into sticks and put into a bowl of water with juice of two lemons.

Cook in enough water to cover, along with the flour for 5-6 mins until it turns slightly tender.


4 Blanch the Swiss chard leaves in salted boiling water (enough to cover) for 15 seconds. As soon as you remove it, put in ice water. Then, arrange on a non-stick tray, brush with olive oil and cover with greaseproof paper. Dry at them at 80C in a ventilated oven for 3 to 4 hrs.

5 Sauté the mushrooms in olive oil with salt and pepper. Set aside.

6 Season the sea bass with fine sea salt and the spice mixture. Cook in a non-stick pan with olive oil and fry scale side down for 2 mins. Turn, cook for another 3 to 4 mins. Set aside and keep warm.

7 Brown 50g of the butter and sauté the Swiss chard stems. Season with salt and pepper.

8 To make the sauce, deglaze the pan used for cooking the Swiss chard with the fish stock. Add the ginger powder, juice of two lemons, cook until it reduces in half. Then, add the the remaining butter, and use a blender to emulsify (a foam is created on top).

9 Arrange the Swiss chard stems in bundles and place the mushrooms around it. Sprinkle the parsley over. Set the fish fillets on top of the bundles and pour the sauce all around it, making sure to include some foam on the plate. Garnish with the dried Swiss chard leaves and serve the remaining sauce separately. 

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MIDDLE EAST

From Spain to Dubai

Spanish Tapas bars seem to be turning into hot property in Dubai at the moment, and one of the first to bring the trend to the city is Salero Tapas & Bodega. We speak to Chef de cuisine Alvaro Roa to find out more.

Alvaro Roa, who hails from Madrid, Spain dreamed about becoming a chef since he was a little boy. His passion for the culinary field stemmed from his love of his grandmother's Sunday family feasts, where she cooked a selection of local specialties which he treasured. The Spanish chef set foot into a restaurant kitchen when he was 18 years old, and did so not after graduating in hospitality management, but after he got his degree in engineering! Alvaro has since worked in Ireland, London, Mexico, Chile and his hometown Madrid, and has stuck to his culinary philosophy of working with local produce as and when he can, throughout his journey. Here, he tells us more about the popular cuisine from his homeland and shares his future plans for Salero Tapas and Bodega, the recently opened Spanish restaurant at Kempinski Hotel Mall of the Emirates.

How did you begin your culinary career?

I initially studied to become an engineer, but once I graduated, I decided to pursue my ambition of working in food. I was about 16 years old when I realised I wanted to travel the world and become a chef. Food is an





integral part of most cultures, and for me, cooking is a way of experiencing and seeing all these cultures. I started with joining as a Commis Chef in a fine dining restaurant in Ireland and then received an offer to join the prestigious Mayfair Hotel in London as Demi chef de Partie. From there, my career led me back to my hometown, to work with Park Hyatt Villa Magna. I stayed with Hyatt for over eight years and worked with their hotels in Spain, Mexico and Chile. I also got to work with an amazing chef in Madrid, Frederic Noyer, who is my mentor as well.

What are some of the most memorable moments of your culinary career?

There are many! One of the moments that comes to mind was when I worked for a hotel in Madrid that was hosting a private event to promote the Formula One in Spain. The request from the client was to place one of the Ferrari cars in the ballroom and in order to do that, the team had to come through the loading bay of the hotel and through our kitchen, which was linked to the ballroom. Having a Ferrari in the kitchen is definitely not something that you see every day! It was a lovely experience and the event was a great success.

Spain is known as one of the world's greatest gastronomic destinations. Why do you think that is?

Back in the day, Spanish cuisine was influenced by many cultures such as the Roman, Greek, Mediterranean and Arabic. Having this combination of cultures resulted in a wonderful mix of ingredients and cooking techniques which are now part of Spanish cuisine. If you've ever visited Spain, you must

have noticed the different types of food in the North and South of the country. The diversity of the cuisine is one of the reasons why this country is so popular with foodies.

How would you best define the Spanish tapas culture and what is your opinion on this food trend that has recently come to Dubai?

Eating tapas is a way of life for most Spanish as we like to gather for a meal of small plates that can be shared with family and friends. This type of culture was designed to allow you to engage in conversation, and have fun and socialise at the same time. Dubai's dining scene is pretty astonishing, with a lot of options from simple to fine dining. The dining scene has something to offer everyone, however there is definitely a gap when it comes to authentic Spanish restaurants, which is where Salero will come to play perfectly.

You mentioned earlier that one of the key reasons why you're a chef is because of your love for your grandmother's cooking. What dishes of hers did you love the most?

The food she made was something really extraordinary. The spread included the best Arroz Con Leche, a Spanish dessert which is made with rice cooked in milk, cinnamon, sugar and lemon. I also love the Pulpo a la Gallega (boiled octopus with potato and smoked paprika). Both these dishes are on the menu at the restaurant.

How do you plan to set Salero apart from all the other venues in town?

Salero is unique as it is an authentic tapas restaurant. The food that we serve is real,

traditional Spanish food with a twist. In addition, the restaurant is a fun, laid-back venue where you will most likely hear Spanish being spoken all around – most of the team members are from Spain. Spanish tunes and the ambience in general will make you feel as though you are dining at a tapas restaurant in Barcelona.

How have you given the food an innovative twist?

The creative touch in the food is not in the recipe but in the presentation. We do our best to keep the recipes of each dish traditional and classic. For example, instead of roasting the lamb we use it as a confit. This way we can focus on the fun and little details on how we present the food on a plate.

Is there anything on the menu you would recommend to guests in particular?

The two things you need to try are Porra Antequerana con huevo y atún (a tomato soup served with egg, tuna and green chive oil) and Rabo de toro con patata y zanahoria (Oxtail served with potato and carrot stew).

What are your future plans for the venue?

We are determined to make Salero the talk of the town by bringing Spain to Dubai! We have a DJ spinning Spanish tunes and flamenco performances as well.

If you could recommend any restaurant in the world for someone to go to (apart from Salero), which one would it be?

I would recommend Martín Berasategui, which is in Lasarte-Oria, Spain. The restaurant was awarded three Michelin Stars in 2001, and is indeed, a lovely gastronomic experience.



Going green in Ireland!

In spite of their differences, one of the things Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland share in common is the philosophy of eating local. Nicola Monteath travels across the borders to taste the best of the island's produce.

Tons of restaurants and shops are located by the River Lagan in Belfast

Some might think that Irish cuisine is just potatoes and little else. This is because back in the 17th century, the Irish found potatoes to be grown in abundance in the region and soon, it became a staple food. Potatoes were, and still are eaten baked, mashed or in stews. But the Irish have since expanded their cuisine to much more than just potatoes and meat, with the discovery of locally sourced ingredients over the years.

Ireland is divided into two countries, which are poles apart in terms of political beliefs, with Northern Ireland being a part of the United Kingdom, and the Republic of Ireland being part of the Eurozone – but they share the same viewpoint when it comes down to supporting local producers and suppliers across the countries.

Dublin, the capital city of the Republic of Ireland encountered a boom in its gastronomic scene through the Celtic Tigers era, whereas across the border, Belfast, the Northern Irish capital city has slowly but successfully cementing its position as a fine dining destination. What's common is a love of eating local, organic produce. It is a long-standing practice across restaurants and

home kitchens. And why not? Delis and supermarkets stock fresh, delicious, homegrown produce, in abundance so it only makes sense to shop for what's available from the island itself. No matter where you eat in these cities, both offer an insight into the famed Irish hospitality. Here's my pick of a few must-visits, whichever side of the border you find yourself on:

NORTHERN STARS

The city of Belfast is still on the quieter side, but is making countless efforts to promote the restaurant scene. The launch of Belfast Restaurant Week (an annual event of dining promotions and activities across the city) back in 2012, was a major culinary move for the city, where residents gathered to dine out at various outlets.

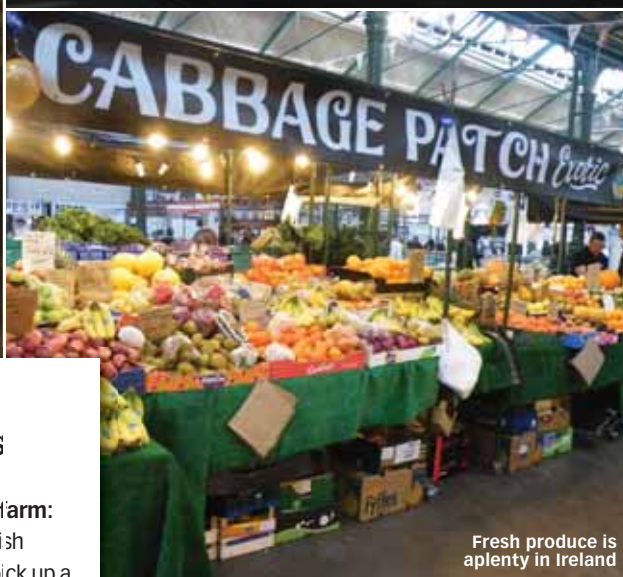
A good place to start exploring Belfast's gastronomic offerings is Shu (shu-restaurant.com), a highly recommended venue, and participant at the Restaurant Week. The modern, stylish restaurant, located in a Victorian building, features dark wenge wood and brown leather interiors to give it a cosy, sophisticated vibe. The menu here comprises of

French-influenced dishes made with seasonal, local produce, and includes a tasty and moist braised blade of beef with mushroom, spinach purée and a potato croquette.

You can't visit Ireland and not sample the famous Irish soda or potato bread, which is why, Ditty's Home Bakery (dittysbakery.com) must be on your list of places to visit. Robert Ditty, the founder, uses age-old baking methods to make soda farls, potato bread and oatcakes – all of which can be bought at the bakery.

In fact, most restaurants in the city, including Ox Belfast (oxbelfast.com), a lunch spot which overlooks the River Lagan, serves freshly baked soda bread – a perfect accompaniment to their hot fennel soup. The restaurant's décor is minimalist chic, with natural light flooding the indoors through floor to ceiling windows, and wooden tables. The food echoes the interiors in certain ways as well, with clean, simple flavours and minimalist presentation in dishes such as the salmon with leek, purple potato and parsnip purée, bursting with flavours from each of the fresh, locally sourced ingredients.

For a truly authentic meal made with Northern

Men's shirts hang high
in LondonderryFresh produce is
aplenty in Ireland

Don't miss these gourmet pit-stops

GO FOOD SHOPPING



Broighter Gold Oil Farm:

Rapeseed oil is an Irish cooking staple, so pick up a few bottles from this rapeseed farm located outside Derry. Visit broightergold.co.uk.

St. George's Market:

Shop for souvenirs, pet food, vintage clothes, art and chocolate, at this marketplace established in Belfast in 1896. You can also sample Irish cheeses and delicacies here.



COOK UP A STORM

Belfast Cookery School: Master the art of shucking oysters and prepare hearty seafood dishes at your own cooking station. Visit belfastcookeryschool.com.

Kitchen in the Castle: This restored Georgian kitchen set in a castle in Howth – a coastal suburb of Dublin – is great for those who keen on learning how to bake Irish soda bread. Visit kitcheninthecastle.com.

Irish produce, visit James Street Bar and Grill (belfastbargrill.co.uk). This laid-back bistro offers a seasonal menu which features fresh seafood and premium meat from nearby farms. You can't go wrong with their succulent piece of rib eye or the grilled honey pork ribs with apple and celeriac salad. Seafood lovers can choose steamed mussels with white wine, chorizo and parsley. To end, the comforting sticky toffee pudding sundae is perfect for Ireland's cold, rainy weather.

Northern Ireland's culinary offerings aren't limited to Belfast alone; just an hour's drive from the city, you can experience rural joie de vivre in Londonderry. Once you've soaked up the interesting atmosphere – who needs great architecture when you have colourful shirts hanging on clotheslines between buildings to pay homage to women who worked in shirt factories? – head to Browns Restaurant and Champagne Lounge (brownsrestaurant.com) to indulge in fresh seafood, grilled sirloin or Moroccan style goat. Head chef Ian Orr makes it a point to promote local produce on his seasonal menus. When here, you could also try the local Abernethy

butter, made by Alison and Will Abernethy, a couple who use traditional churning methods to make creamy butter rolls at their Berchtree Farm in Down (another county in Northern Ireland). This butter is so popular that it counts the likes of Heston Blumenthal as one of its customers.

For a more relaxed, riverside dining experience, stop by Pyke 'N' Pommes (pykenpommes.com) – the first food truck in Northern Ireland – situated on Queens Quay, a stretch of land on the west bank of the River Foyle. Kevin Pyke, the owner of the truck, is a champion of local produce and one of his best creations is the 'The Cod father' which is made up of freshly caught cod, warm potato salad and the popular Irish delicacy black pudding (crispy batter fried blood sausage).

Even though Northern Ireland may not yet be on the world's culinary map, there are few destinations better than this to enjoy the celebration of fine ingredients and hearty, home-style cooking, than here.

DELICIOUS DUBLIN

Leafy squares with Georgian townhouses, buskers, couples dancing at shopping squares, centuries-old castles and an area – Temple Bar – dedicated solely to pubs, make up the vibrant city of Dublin. The thriving foodie scene here means that any restaurant, even casual, street-side outlets, are busy on a week night. This is purely because Dubliners prefer to eat at laid-back restaurants rather than fine dining outlets.

A great way of eating your way through Dublin is with a tour with The Fabulous Food Trail (fabfoodtrails.ie), who offer a variety of tours in the city and beyond. My two and a half hour Dublin Tasting Trail, which covers leading hotspots to dine and shop at in the city (afternoon tours are also available), started with a visit to Sheridans Cheesemongers (sheridanscheesemongers.com), a quaint cheese shop which sells Irish farmhouse cheeses such as Coolea – a butterscotch flavoured, salty cow's cheese. Up next was a whisky tasting at the Celtic's Whiskey shop, one of the oldest pubs in the city, and then The Pepper Pot Café (thepepperpot.ie) located in The Powerscourt Centre's Loft Market, to try the salmon with cream cheese bagel. We then made our way to Blazing Salads (blazingsalads.com), a wholegrain, vegetarian deli perfect for a grab-and-go salad or soup, after which the tour came to a halt at Fallon and Byrne (fallonandbyrne.com), a upscale gourmet food hall selling meat, cheese and produce from local and international suppliers.

Since lunch is out of the question after a morning like this, make a detour for the >>



The Temple Bar area is always buzzing



Vintage teapots at The Pepper Pot café



Get your Irish cheese fix at Sheridans Cheesemongers

Afternoon Art tea at Merrion Hotel (merrionhotel.com) to treat yourself to rhubarb tea, finger sandwiches and a selection of pastries which resemble the artwork on the hotel walls from famous painters such as J.B Yeats, William Scott and Louis Le Brocquy.

For a taste of the authentic, head to Fade Street Social (fadestreetssocial.com), a restaurant and bar helmed by TV Master chef Dylan McGrath, to try the traditional Irish lamb stew with carrots. The locally sourced lamb needs no effort tearing apart as it is incredibly tender and rich.

Another promoter of Irish produce is Hugos (hugos.ie), a French eatery with an Irish twist, where you can relish chicken liver pâté with toasted brioche and slow braised daube of beef. You can also have a delightful, mouthwatering meal at Francesca's restaurant in Brooks Hotel (brookshotel.ie). Don't miss their freshly poached chicken with tender mushrooms, that have a hint of sweetness, steeped in a rich, heavenly cream sauce. The head chef here is a keen forager and offers meals made with indigenous and wild ingredients through the seasons.

Of course, when in Dublin, you can't not pack in a bit of nightlife. End your day with a music pub crawl (musicalpubcrawl.com) led by two Irish musicians, which takes you to four bars in the Temple Bar area where you get to listen and sing along to witty Irish folk songs – a traditional music culture worth experiencing.

Dublin's warm, friendly vibe – where everyone from restaurant staff to taxi drivers have a kind word for you – only complement the high standards I found in restaurants here, where fresh produce meets passion for good food. **GF**

TRAVEL DIARY

GETTING THERE

British Airways flies to Belfast (Economy tickets from Dhs7,000; britishairways.com). A taxi ride to Dublin with Value Cabs (valuecabs.co.uk) is approximately an hour and a half away (from Dhs600), while the train journey takes one hour and can be booked on irishrails.ie (Dhs100). When in Dublin, hire the Ganter Brothers, a chauffeur-driven limo service, to whizz you through the city's crowded streets (ganterchauffeurdrive.ie).

STAYING THERE

Belfast: Fitzwilliam Hotel Belfast, a modern boutique hotel located in the centre of the city, offers stylishly designed rooms, complemented with The White Company toiletries to make for a luxurious stay. Don't miss their hearty breakfast offerings which includes a full Irish meal with eggs, bacon, hash browns and black and white pudding. Room rates from £105 pounds per night (Dhs635), visit fitzwilliamhotelbelfast.com.



Dublin: Brooks Hotel on Drury Street is located close to Grafton Street – home to designer and high-street stores. The rooms are eclectic and include everything a jaded traveller desires (upon request) – from a pillow menu to a foot spa. The hotel is also home to the Jasmine Bar – voted one of the 'Greatest Whisky Bars of the world' by Whisky magazine – The Café lounge, for a cup of tea or light lunch, and Francesca's restaurant (see above). Room rates from Euro €109 per night (Dhs550), visit brookshotel.ie.

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The Boardwalk restaurant Masterclass

Last month's Food Club event at Hacker Kitchen showroom saw light, fresh Mediterranean-inspired dishes from Boardwalk restaurant's new menu showcased by Chef Stefano Andreoni.



Chef Stefano brought Italian flair to the evening



Tuscan Panzanella salad

SERVES 4 • PREP 10 MINS • COOK 10 MINS

250g stale bread
1 tsp white vinegar
100g cherry tomatoes, cut in halves
½ red onion, thinly sliced
1 cucumber, diced
1 bunch of fresh basil, thinly sliced
8 prawns
50ml extra virgin olive oil
Salt and pepper

- 1 Cut the bread roughly, soak in cold water with white vinegar and salt for 15 mins.
- 2 Squeeze out the juice, crumble the bread and place in a bowl.
- 3 Boil the prawns and set aside once cooked. Allow it to cool.
- 4 Season the bread with salt, pepper and olive oil. Mix the onions, cherry tomatoes and cucumbers before refrigerating.
- 5 To serve, drizzle the vegetable mixture with olive oil, add the prawns on top of the cooled bread mix and top with basil.



MAIN

Grilled Sea Bass with Lobster Tortellone

SERVES 4 • PREP 30 MINS • COOK 10 MINS

1kg flour

700g eggs

50ml olive oil

FOR THE FILLING

1kg lobster

200g parmesan cheese

10g bread crumbs

200g cream cheese

FOR THE SAUCE VIERGE

200ml olive oil

80g tomatoes

60g lemon

10g basil leaves

5g chervil leaves

5g garlic

5g coriander seeds

100g red pepper

FOR THE SICILIAN MARINADE

1kg fresh seabass fillets

100g fresh oregano

100g fresh rosemary

250g orange

20g garlic

20g capers

300ml extra virgin olive oil

1 Make a well in the flour, add the eggs and a tablespoon of extra virgin olive oil. Knead vigorously until all the dough is of same consistency and it looks shiny on the surface. Let the dough rest for 30 mins at room temperature.

2 Cut the lobster meat into small pieces and sauté in a little butter with the shallots. Season to taste. Remove lobster from heat and allow to cool. Add the cream cheese, parmesan and chives. If the mixture is too runny, add bread crumbs as required.

3 Roll out dough to a thickness of 1-2mm using a rolling pin. Cut circles of 10-12cm width and place a generous teaspoon of the filling. Fold the dough to get a crescent and fold again to get the shape of the tortelloni.

4 Combine the sauce vierge ingredients in a bowl, mix gently and season. Just before serving, warm the sauce on the stove to about 30C - use a thermometer to check.

5 For the Sicilian marinade, blend the oregano, chilli, garlic and capers. Add the orange zest to the mix of herbs and then add the extra virgin olive oil. Rub the mixture onto the fish and allow it to marinate for 20 to 30 mins before grilling.

6 Cook the tortelloni in boiling salted water. When they arise to the surface they are cooked. Remove and place on a plate with the grilled fish on the side. Spoon a tablespoon of the warm sauce on the fish and garnish with springs of parsley, chives and cherry tomatoes. >>

Two classic Italian treats in one plate make for a decadent dessert



Tiramisu with ricotta filled cannoli and orange and star anise sauce

SERVES 6 • PREP 30 MINS • COOK 10 MINS

350g ricotta cheese
100 glacé cherries
50g chocolate chips
100g roasted almonds
50g icing sugar

FOR THE PASTRY

200g flour
2 tsp sugar
2 tsp margarine
2 tsp corn oil

125ml cold water
750ml corn or peanut oil

A piece of lemon rind

FOR THE STAR ANISE SAUCE

3 star anise
500ml milk
6 egg yolks
130g sugar
1 orange, finely chopped and blanched

FOR THE TIRAMISU

10 eggs, yolks and whites separated
1kg mascarpone cheese
10 tbsp sugar
5 amaretti biscuits, crumbled
750ml espresso or mocha coffee
1 packet of lady finger biscuits
Cocoa powder or chocolate bar, for garnish

1 Mash the ricotta and chop the chocolate chips, cherries and almonds. Add these to the ricotta cheese with the sugar. Mix all the ingredients together, using a dough hook in your food processor, or mix by hand.

2 Roll the pastry out thinly. Cut into rounds with a cutter and place each round piece over a tube.

3 Heat the corn or peanut oil and drop in a piece of lemon rind. Fry the cannoli a few at a time turning them until they are evenly brown. When the lemon rind gets brown, replace with a fresh piece.

4 Cool the cannoli on absorbent paper. Once it has cooled, fill with the ricotta cheese mixture.

5 To make the sauce, boil the star anise with the milk in a thick-bottomed pan on low heat. Meanwhile, mix together the egg yolks and sugar. Remove the star anise from the milk and then add the sugar and egg mixture in. Mix with a wooden spoon until smooth. Cook the custard slowly, making sure it doesn't boil and is slightly thick in texture. Use a thermometer to make sure the temperature is 83-84C throughout the cooking process. To know when the custard is ready, dip a spoon in it, it should leave a smooth veil. Add the orange to the custard and keep warm until ready to use.

6 Beat the egg whites until stiff. Blend the egg yolks with the sugar. Combine the two with a whisk, in movements from the bottom upwards. Keep in a cool place.

7 In a deep tray, place the finger biscuits soaked in coffee. Cover with the mascarpone and add the crumbled amaretti. Repeat until the biscuits, mascarpone and amaretti are all used. Decorate with cocoa powder or grated chocolate. Cut a portion of the tiramisu and place on a plate. Serve with cannoli and orange sauce on the side. The tiramisu can also be assembled directly in a serving bowl. **RF**

SNAPSHOTS FROM THE EVENT



Editor Sudeshna Ghosh welcomes the chef and audience



Chef Stefano enjoyed interacting with the guests



Enthusiastic foodies gathered round to photograph the food



Lucky raffle draw winners got dining vouchers to take home

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Spanish soirée

Tapas are some of Spain's best known foodie exports. At our recent masterclass held at Salero -Tapas & Bodega at Kempinski Hotel Mall of the Emirates, Food Club members got a sneak peek into the restaurant before it opened.

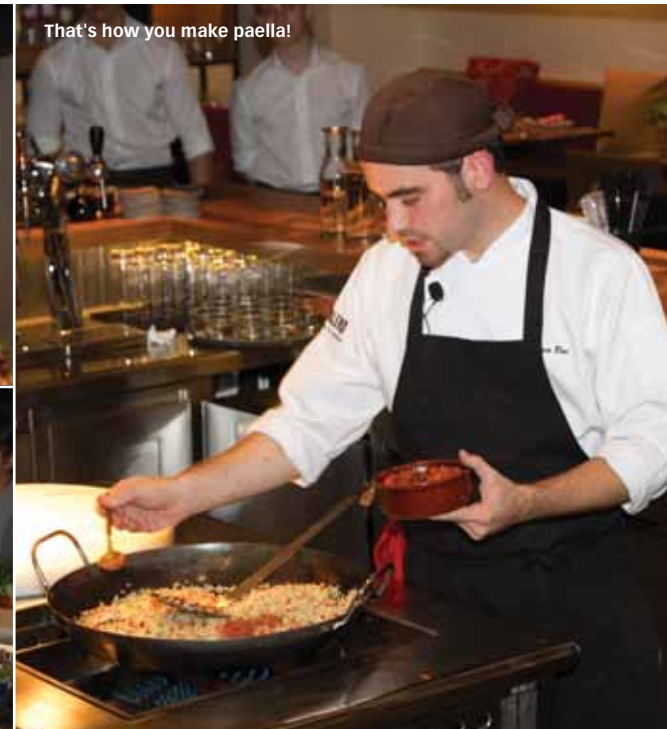
The newly launched Spanish eatery, Salero-Tapas & Bodega at Kempinski Hotel Mall of the Emirates was the venue for our recent *BBC Good Food ME* Food Club masterclass where Chef de cuisine Alvaro Roa showed foodies how to prepare some of Spain's favourite dishes. Members gathered in the restaurant, which boasts an open cooking station in the centre, and sampled Spanish tapas such as spicy batatas bravas, fried calamari, chicken croquettes, a Spanish omelette and glasses of sangria, before the cooking demonstration could even begin! The interactive chef prepared three authentic, simple Spanish dishes which were sampled by guests as soon as each was prepared. Two lucky winners also walked away with dining vouchers from the restaurant, while everyone took home a goodie bag. Take a look at all the fun we had, and the food we ate, and try these classic Spanish recipes that are simple enough for even a beginner to attempt.



BBC Good Food ME's Lauren Wing welcomes the audience



The friendly team of chefs



That's how you make paella!



Chef Alvaro Roa in action



Tasty tapas for everyone

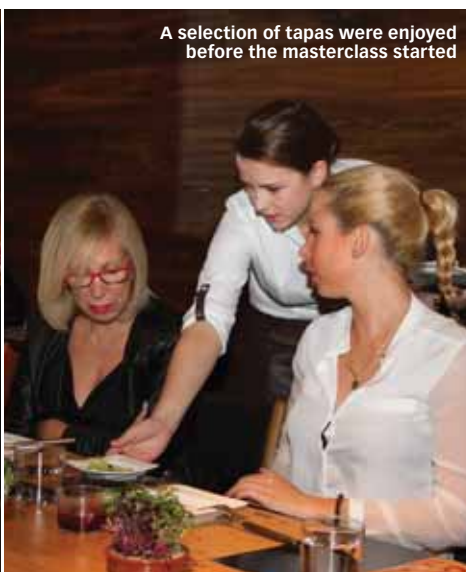


Guests captured all the action on camera and sampled every dish

Photography by SADEE PATTANAB



Plenty of food for everyone!



A selection of tapas were enjoyed before the masterclass started



The audience was all eyes and ears



A lucky raffle draw winner



Another winner of the dining voucher

This cold soup is as refreshing as it is light



STARTER

Gazpacho (Cold tomato and cucumber soup)

SERVES 4 • PREP 30 MINS

• COOK 10 MINS **Easy** **V**

1kg tomatoes
50g cucumber
200g red pepper
5 cloves garlic
120ml olive oil
30ml vinegar
Pinch of salt

- 1** Blend the tomatoes, cucumber, red pepper and garlic in a blender, until the texture becomes smooth.
- 2** Strain and place the mixture in a bowl. Then add olive oil, vinegar and salt
- 3** Serve in small glasses with diced red and green pepper or croutons on the side (optional). >>



MAIN

Seafood paella

SERVES 4 • PREP 15 MINS • COOK 30 MINS **Easy**

10g garlic
50g cuttlefish
50ml olive oil
50g red pepper
50g green peppers
300g bomba rice
1g saffron
600ml fish stock
250g mussels
250g clams
20g tomato paste
10pcs prawns
Pinch of salt
Lemon wedges, to serve

- 1 In a paella or big flat pan, sauté the garlic, cuttlefish and red and green bell peppers in olive oil. Mix for few minutes until the cuttlefish is cooked.
- 2 Add the rice and saffron and continue sautéing for a couple of minutes on slow fire to allow the rice to absorb all the flavours. Add the fish stock.
- 3 Once the stock starts to get hot, add the mussels and the clams. Finally, add the tomato paste and mix everything together.
- 4 When the mixture starts to boil, add the prawns on the top of the rice, to let them cook in the steam. Cook for 15 mins.
- 5 Take the rice off the heat and set aside for 5 mins. Serve with a lemon wedge on the side.

CHEF'S TIP: The secret to making good paella is to keep the fire on medium, so the rice cooks in the same temperature all around the paella pan. Make sure you don't move the rice while it's cooking.

Torrija Cordobesa (Spanish bread pudding)

SERVES 4 • PREP 20 MINS • COOK 5 MINS **Easy**

DESSERT

150g sugar
500ml milk
4 bread slices
50g flour
5 eggs, beaten
100ml vegetable oil
20g cinnamon

- 1 Boil the milk with 100g sugar. Once boiled, take off the heat and refrigerate until cold.
- 2 Soak the bread in milk and then drain to remove any excess milk.
- 3 Cover the bread in flour and then soak in the eggs.
- 4 Warm vegetable oil in a pan and fry the bread until it becomes golden in colour.
- 5 Serve the bread on a plate, with sugar and cinnamon sprinkled on top and the milk sauce on the side. **GF**



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Dusit Thani Dubai, the iconic five-star hotel on Sheikh Zayed Road, is ideal for a weekend city break amidst luxurious surroundings. The hotel – part of the Thailand based international chain – boasts recently renovated rooms and suites, which offer views of Dubai's stunning skyline, while facilities such as a rooftop swimming pool, gymnasium and Jacuzzi make for a relaxing stay. Dusit Thani Dubai is also home to a number of excellent fine-dining outlets including Benjarong, Pax and The Californian, all of which come together on the 24th floor of the hotel on Fridays for an extravagant Friday Brunch.

One lucky winner and a friend can escape to this city retreat to stay at the executive suite and get Club privileges such as buffet breakfast, happy hour cocktails and canapés, as well as tea, coffee and refreshments. The winners can also enjoy dinner at The Californian, and feast at the Friday Brunch.



Log on bbcgoodfoodme.com to enter this competition and simply answer this question:

How many restaurants are part of the Friday brunch at the hotel?

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Bon Appétit experiences with Emirates NBD

The kitchens of the newly opened Alta Badia restaurant at Jumeirah Emirates Towers, was the venue for the latest Emirates NBD Bon Appetit Experiences evening hosted by *BBC Good Food Middle East*.

The Emirates NBD Bon Appetit Experiences event with *BBC Good Food ME* saw guests enjoying bubbly and a selection of canapés including panko crumbed Gulf prawns, dill marinated salmon with lemon butter, and lamb on skewers with balsamic vinegar, in the stylish new Italian restaurant located on the 51st floor of the Jumeirah Emirates Towers. Once the canapés were devoured, guests made their way inside the kitchen – a first for such events – to watch Executive Italian chef Claudio Melis cook three easy-to-make Italian dishes. Guests got a whiff of the beautiful aromas and sampled dishes as soon as they were prepared. Three lucky guests even walked away with dining vouchers from the restaurant in a raffle draw, while every guest received a goodie bag. Here's a look back at the fun event, and two of the recipes demonstrated in the masterclass.



The dishes were a work of art



Taster portions of the dishes were sampled



BBC Good Food ME's Lauren Wing introduces the chef



Chef Claudio shows how to make perfect pasta



Everyone enjoyed trying the food right after it was cooked



One winner will get to enjoy a free three-course meal for two at the restaurant



Guests picked up tips and tricks from the chef



Another lucky winner of the evening

Text: NICOLA MONTEATH | Photos by ANAS CHERUR



Cappellacci Melanzane e Burrata (Roasted eggplant and burrata cappellacci)

SERVES 4 | PREP 2HRS | COOK 15 MINS

FOR CAPPELLACCI PASTA DOUGH

200g semolina

300g 00 flour

12 egg yolks

10g salt

1 tbsp olive oil

FOR THE STUFFING

400g large eggplant

200g burrata, chopped roughly

2g salt

0.5g black pepper

10ml olive oil

0.5g fresh basil

FOR THE SAUCE

240g cherry tomatoes

80ml tomato sauce

1g salt

0.2g black pepper

30ml olive oil

0.5g basil

1g garlic

- 1 To make the pasta dough, mix all the ingredients together until it becomes hard but stretchy in texture. Refrigerate for 1 hr.
- 2 Wrap the eggplant in aluminum foil and cook at 165C for 45 mins.
- 3 Remove from the oven and cut in half. Remove the seed and keep the flesh. Chop and mix with the burrata. Then add the salt, pepper, olive oil and basil.
- 4 To make the cappellacci, roll the pasta dough very thin – you should be able to see your hands through it – and cut a small square in the pasta dough. Fill with the burrata mix and close to make a triangle, then bring all the ends together to make a small hat shape. Repeat until you have as many as you need.
- 5 Cut the tomatoes in quarters. Sauté the garlic in olive oil and then add the tomatoes and cook for 1 min. Add the tomato sauce, a little water and season.
- 6 Cook the cappellacci in boiling salted water for 3 mins. Remove, drain, then add the tomato sauce and cook for a few seconds.
- 7 Serve with olive oil drizzled on top and basil leaves for garnish.



Risotto Funghi e Taleggio (Wild mushrooms and taleggio ferron risotto)

SERVES 4 | PREP 20 MINS | COOK 20 MINS

60g butter

40ml olive oil

320g carnaroli rice

40g slow cooked shallots

700ml vegetable stock

5g garlic

0.5g thyme

50g chanterelle mushrooms, sliced

50g brown mushrooms, sliced

50g bottom mushrooms, sliced

50g portobello mushrooms, sliced

4g salt

0.5g black pepper

1g parsley, chopped

50g parmesan, grated

40g Taleggio cheese, melted

- 1 Melt 30g of butter with the olive oil in a large pot, add the shallot and the rice. Toast the rice for a few seconds and cover with the stock. Cook slowly for around 16 to 18 mins.
- 2 Warm the oil in a large pan, add garlic and thyme. Add the mushrooms, stew slowly and then add salt and pepper. Sprinkle chopped parsley on top.
- 3 Remove the risotto from the stove and add the remaining butter, parmesan, melted taleggio, salt and pepper.
- 4 Spoon the risotto on a deep plate and top with the mushrooms. Serve very hot.

The 'Bon Appétit Experience' is an extension of the 'Bon Appétit' programme that was launched in 2011 by Emirates NBD, which enables cardholders to enjoy exclusive discounts of up to 30 per cent at over 1,500 restaurants in the UAE, Middle East and Europe, when they use their Emirates NBD Debit or Credit Card.





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Competitions

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WIN! A WEEKEND STAY AT FAIRMONT BAB AL BAHR AND TICKETS TO GOURMET ABU DHABI, WORTH OVER DHS2,000. One lucky winner and a friend can enjoy a luxurious overnight stay and breakfast at the Fairmont Bab Al Bahr hotel, and head to the opening ceremony of 2014 Gourmet Abu Dhabi on February 4, to sample dishes from celebrity chefs.



WIN! THREE COURSE MEAL FOR TWO AT CHINWAGGERY AND SOUL BAR, LOUNGE AND RESTAURANT, MÖVENPICK HOTEL JUMEIRAH BEACH, WORTH OVER DHS1,000. Chinwaggery, the poolside bar and lounge which sprawls outdoors, is the perfect place for an after-hours cocktail, while the new Soul restaurant, a New York-style brasserie, is great for those who want a succulent piece of steak and seafood or to enjoy light nibbles. One winner and a guest can get to savour a three-course meal with a bottle of house wine at this relaxed restaurant.



WIN! DINNER FOR TWO AT IZAKAYA, JW MARRIOTT MARQUIS HOTEL DUBAI, WORTH DHS500. Take a dining partner to this upscale Japanese eatery nestled in the hotel, to treat your taste buds to traditional as well as inside out sushi rolls, tepenyaki, yaki soba noodles and sashimi.

WIN!

DINING VOUCHERS FROM BOARDWALK, DUBAI CREEK GOLF AND YACHT CLUB, WORTH DHS2,000.

Two winners can each take three guests along with them to the recently renovated restaurant which boasts views of the spectacular Dubai Creek. The menu features Mediterranean-inspired dishes including a fresh seafood display and hot pizzas from the authentic pizza oven.

Check out the recipes from last month's Food Club Masterclass with the Boardwalk chef on p80.



WIN!

DINING VOUCHERS FROM REEM AL BAWADI, RAMADA DEIRA, WORTH DHS500 EACH.

The authentic Arabic restaurant which has branches all over the city, has long been a Dubai institution. Two lucky winners and their guests can visit the newly opened branch in Deira – the fifth from the brand – to try delicious mezze plates, kebab sandwiches, grilled chicken and a selection of Lebanese delights as well as flavoured sheesha.



WIN! LUNCH FOR TWO AT MAZINA, THE ADDRESS DUBAI MARINA, WORTH DHS 250.

A winner and guest get to try the Business lunch at this all-day dining restaurant, which is set up in a buffet style and features Asian, Arabic and European dishes, as well as hot Cantonese dishes and a Rotisserie grill from live cooking stations.

WIN!

DINING VOUCHER FROM SALERO TAPAS & BODEGA, KEMPINSKI HOTEL MOE, WORTH DHS300.

One lucky winner and a partner can visit this new Spanish eatery, to feast on tapas platters, and dishes including traditional seafood or chicken paella, or oxtail with potato and carrot stew while enjoying Spanish music.

Check out the recipes from last month's Food Club Masterclass with the Salero chef on p84.



WIN!

DINNER FOR TWO AT TONG THAI, JW MARRIOTT MARQUIS HOTEL DUBAI, WORTH DHS500.

One winner and a friend can relish authentic regional Thai dishes such as roasted duck red curry, char grilled baby chicken with dried chilli sauce, steamed pomfret with soy sauce and ginger, and a selection of Phad Thai noodles at this elegant, modern Thai restaurant.



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KAREN MCLEAN, an Australian native of Chinese-Vietnamese origin, is the creative mind, photographer and chef behind the food blog Secret Squirrel Food. She moved to Dubai just six months ago and works as an analyst for a Japanese pharmaceuticals company. Karen loves spending her weekends baking and cooking in her kitchen from her Downtown Dubai apartment, meeting new people, learning about cultures, travelling and dancing. Her main passion and vision is to promote healthy eating in the Middle East.

Meet the blogger

Helping you connect to the UAE'S foodie community, one blog post at a time.

*About the blog

Secretsquirrelfood.com was launched in late 2013 and is a collection of recipes that celebrates the pleasures of eating simple, natural and wholesome food. All recipes are sugar-, gluten- and dairy-free and mostly raw and devoid of refined products. I love to experiment in the kitchen and explore healthy alternatives to not-so-healthy food. Eating healthy doesn't have to be boring – if you think it is, take a look at the blog and find out how to make healthy food appetising and fun!



Top cooking tips

* Soak **cashew nuts** overnight and blend into a paste with a little coconut milk to get a delicious substitute for cream.

* **Goji berries** are rich in antioxidants and make an energising detox tea. Make it by adding a handful of goji berries to boiling water.

* Prepare a nutritious chocolate dip by mixing 60ml melted **coconut oil** with 1 tbsp raw agave syrup and 120g raw cacao powder. To make your own chocolate bars, pour it on a lined tray, sprinkle chopped fruit and nut pieces and freeze for 30 mins.

66 I am a peanut butter addict. You may sometimes find me with a sneaky grin, a spoon and an empty peanut butter jar – quite like a squirrel! 99

Full of nostalgia

My favourite memory is of me celebrating Chinese New Year with my parents. Every year, they put out an extravagant Chinese New Year's dinner, which often includes my favourite homemade spring rolls, dumplings, steamed fish, Vietnamese pancakes, rice paper rolls and fresh vermicelli salad.

Snack attack My homemade salted caramel crunch bars – the perfect guilt-free afternoon snack!

Culinary icons

Matthew Kenney, a raw food chef and cookbook author who is passionate about sustainable eating and living.

My healthy grocery list

Chia seeds: They are packed with essential Omega 3 fatty acids and taste great over muesli or in a pudding for breakfast.

Cinnamon: I love sprinkling this powder over fruits and yoghurt for breakfast.

Peppermint tea: I indulge in a big cup of this tea to aid digestion after meals.

Dates: The flavour and texture of the different date varieties available in the Middle East are great!

Coconut oil: A healthy alternative to butter or vegetable oil.

MY TEN-MINUTE MEAL

Green tea soba noodles with orange soy dressing and a sprinkle of black sesame seeds – quick and very tasty!

In 2014, I'll be eating more...

Kale! This leafy green vegetable is super nutritious and tastes great as chips or in a green smoothie.



Simply super!

I get my energy from my superfood sprinkles. It is basically a homemade mixture of chia seeds, pumpkin seeds, sunflower seeds, flax seeds, goji berries and bee pollen mixed together.





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Simply Homemaking

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